DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 431 907 CE 078 896

AUTHOR McGuirk, Jenny; Wickert, Rosie
TITLE "Worth the While": A Case Study of Adult Literacy Development. Research Report No. 3.
INSTITUTION Technology Univ., Sydney (Australia). Centre for Language and Literacy.
ISBN ISBN-1-86365-268-X
PUB DATE 1997-00-00
NOTE 94p.
AVAILABLE FROM Centre for Language and Literacy, Faculty of Education, University of Technology, Sydney, P.O. Box123, Broadway, NSW 2007, Australia.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adult Basic Education; *Adult Literacy; Case Studies; Classroom Techniques; *Educational Objectives; Foreign Countries; *Literacy Education; *Outcomes of Education; Program Effectiveness; Student Attitudes; Teacher Attitudes
IDENTIFIERS *Australia (Sydney); *Certificate In Adult Basic Education (Australia)

ABSTRACT

Australia's Certificate in Adult Basic Education (CABE) curriculum was examined through a case study of a CABE English class of nine students that was held in an outer Sydney Technical and Further Education college. Data were collected through the following activities: (1) semistructured interviews with the teacher and three students; (2) review of the teacher's planning notes and handouts and student writing; and (3) two 3-hour classroom observations conducted during weeks 5 and 12 of the 18-week course (English 1). The teacher had 18 years of experience teaching high school and had been a full-time adult basic education teacher for 6 years. The students were a 40-year-old female, 21-year-old male, and 36-year-old female. The literacy being constructed by the teacher in the study classroom was a performative, functional literacy that was concerned with individual students' personal growth and placed strong emphasis on building self-esteem and developing self-confidence. A variety of texts were being used in class, including the following: writing opinions, descriptions, and book reviews; reading newspapers and books; doing crossword and other puzzles; and giving a talk. There was some evidence of student literacy practice outside the classroom. The students saw themselves, often for the first time, as successful learners. The teacher viewed herself as a facilitator, and the students saw themselves as successful learners on pathways to further courses or jobs. Numerous student writing samples are included. Appended are the following: chronological summary of data, transcripts from two observation, and table detailing four reader/writer roles.) (Contains 38 references.) (MN)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 431 907

University of Technology, Sydney

Centre for Language and Literacy

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"Worth the While"

A Case Study of Adult Literacy Development

Jenny McGuirk
Rosie Wickert

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

J McGuirk
J Wickert

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

Research report
no. 3

University of Technology, Sydney
Centre for Language and Literacy

"Worth the While"

A Case Study of Adult Literacy Development

Jenny McGuirk
Rosie Wickert

Research report
no. 3

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Published by the Centre for Language and Literacy, Faculty of Education,
University of Technology, Sydney, Australia

Copies may be obtained from:

Centre for Language and Literacy
Faculty of Education
University of Technology, Sydney
PO Box 123
Broadway
NSW 2007
Australia

ISBN 1 86365 268 x
Copyright © Jenny McGuirk and Rosie Wickert 1997
and © Centre for Language and Literacy, University of Technology, Sydney,
1997.

CONTENTS

List of Acronyms iii

Acknowledgments iv

1. Introduction 1
   - 1.1 Background
   - 1.2 Definitions of literacy

2. Methodology 7
   - 2.1 Choice of methodology
   - 2.2 Data collection procedures
     - 2.2.1 The participants
     - 2.2.2 Data collected

3. Theoretical Framework 11

4. The CABE Case Study 15
   - 4.1 The Participants
   - 4.2 The CABE Curriculum
   - 4.3 The Observations
   - 4.4 Categorisation of Written Data
   - 4.5 Student Writing

5. Discussion 57

6. Epilogue 61

Bibliography 65

Appendices
   - I Chronological summary of data 69
   - II Observation 1 Transcript 73
   - III Observation 2 Transcript 81
   - IV Four Reader/Writer Roles 83

ACRONOYMS

ABE	Adult Basic Education
ACAL	Australian Council for Adult Literacy
ALBSAC	Adult Literacy & Basic Skills Action Coalition
ALIO	Adult Literacy Information Office
ALLP	Australian Language and Literacy Policy
AMES	Adult Migrant English Service
CABE	Certificate of Adult Basic Education
CAFE	Certificate of Adult Foundation Education
CES	Commonwealth Employment Service
CGE	Certificate in General Education
DEET	Department of Employment, Education & Training
ESB	English Speaking Background
ESOL	English to Speakers of Other Languages
HSC	Higher School Certificate
NESB	Non-English Speaking Background
NLLIA	National Language and Literacy Institute of Australia
RAWFA	Reading and Writing for Adults
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
TESOL	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
UTS	University of Technology, Sydney
VOAELP	Vocationally Oriented Adult Education & Literacy Program

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank Alison Lee for her help. We would also like to thank the teacher and students who agreed to be observed and interviewed - thanks!

The title of the report comes from Lyn, one of the students who was interviewed, who remembered her mother being told not to bother sending Lyn to school because it wasn't worth the while. Lyn's experience as an adult literacy student refutes that attitude.

It is usual, in the case of jointly authored publications, to indicate the relative contribution of each. In this case, Jenny McGuirk is responsible for the lion's share of this report. Her personal thoughts about being a researcher are included here as an epilogue.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

This research is the result of a submission in 1992 to the Vocationally Oriented Adult Education and Literacy Program (VOAELP), later the Australian Language and Literacy Policy (ALLP), NSW committee. The submission was a joint one between the University of Technology, Sydney (UTS) and the Adult Migrant English Service (AMES) with the aim of discovering more about how adults - both of English speaking background (ESB) and non-English speaking background (NESB) - develop literacy. It was thought that by tracking and mapping language development over an extended period of time, this would give the field information about teaching and learning in certain curriculum contexts.

At the time, a number of surveys and projects had been done, particularly as a result of International Literacy Year 1990. Projects such as *The Learning Experience: Perspectives of Former Students from Two Adult Literacy Programs* (Black & Sim 1990) *Outcomes of adult literacy programs* (Brennan et al 1989), *Just one more problem: perceptions of literacy by community service providers and their clients in two areas of metropolitan Sydney* (Giumelli 1990), *Adults using literacy in groups* (Grant 1991), *The Pedagogical Relations between Adult Literacy and Adult ESL* (Hammond et al 1992a), *An emerging national curriculum* (Holland 1992), *No Single Measure* (Wickert 1989). Many of these reports highlighted affective outcomes, ie how people gained confidence and increased self esteem since coming to adult literacy classes. Only a few focussed on actual language development like *Literacy Development: A longitudinal study* (Hood & Kightley 1991).

Since then, the field of adult literacy and language has undergone rapid and remarkable change - in provision, curriculum, funding arrangements, theoretical underpinnings and in the way literacy is required to meet vocational, rather than personal, goals. There is increasing pressure from funding bodies seeking measurable outcomes alongside an increasing desire by practitioners to be better informed about the learning/teaching process in order to improve their own practice. There have been numerous national research projects funded by the Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) in recent years, and there is now a national research network coordinated by the National Languages and Literacy Institute of Australia (NLLIA). There is also a National Framework to inform curriculum and a National Reporting System. The face of adult language and literacy has changed dramatically.

In the light of this changing context therefore, it can be difficult to remain convinced of the value of a small-scale research project such as this one. It would seem that time may have passed it by. Indeed, the curriculum that was then under study (the Certificate in Adult Basic Education [CABE]) has been replaced by the competency-based Certificate in Adult Foundation Education (CAFE) curriculum. However, despite this, it can be argued that providing a rich case study of even one particular teaching/learning situation can inform practitioners and build on an archive of case studies which allow for cumulation and comparison. Little has been documented of the actual teaching-learning dynamics in adult literacy. Indeed, according to Grant (1991 p. 1.2)

> there is a limited research base in adult literacy in Australia on which to develop theories of how adult literacy students learn, the most effective learning environments, the most effective methodologies for tuition and the most appropriate ways of assessing progress.

Understanding and theory can be built from case studies such as this one (Stenhouse 1981 in Deakin 1987 p. 5) and the field benefits from the development of such knowledge.

The following questions formed the basis of the investigation:

- What literacy/ies are being constructed by teachers in classrooms?
- What texts (spoken and written) are being worked on?
- How do people in classrooms learn to be literacy students?
- How does the curriculum operate to position people as literacy learners?
- What literacies are practised outside the classroom? Is there transfer of learning occurring?
- How useful is the Freebody & Luke (1990) model of reader roles in analysing what occurs in classrooms?
- How do teachers perceive what they are doing?
- How do students perceive what they are doing?

Answers to, or information about, these questions was gathered from a number of sources as outlined in the methodology section and are discussed in the final section of the report.

1.2 Definitions of Literacy

As part of the background to this project it is important to examine the various and changing definitions of literacy which provide the context of the

project. Literacy has been defined and re-defined, particularly since International Literacy Year 1990. A lot of time and effort has been expended in the search for an agreed definition in the hope that agreement in the naming of the 'problem' will lead to effective solutions (Wickert 1992). This energy is well-spent however, because control

> of 'acceptable' versions of literacy, is central to the ideological maintenance of political and social order and national culture.
> (Ball, Kenny & Gardiner in Woods 1991 p. 85)

The *Australian Language and Literacy Policy* (ALLP) (DEET 1991) conceived literacy as

> the ability to read and use written information and to write appropriately, in a range of contexts. It is used to develop knowledge and understanding, to achieve personal growth and to function effectively in our society.

This 'effective literacy' is

> intrinsically purposeful, flexible and dynamic and continues to develop throughout an individual's lifetime. All Australians need to have effective literacy in English, not only for their personal benefit and welfare but also for Australia to achieve its social and economic goals.

The policy paper goes on to argue that

> We cannot afford the inequities and inefficiencies which a waste of human resources would entail.
> (DEET 1991 p. 1)

There is a construction here of literacy as a commodity and a belief that increased literacy will not only be personally beneficial, but will also lead to increased productivity and economic growth. This definition connects the liberal progressive discourse (with its emphasis on the individual's personal growth and welfare) with that of economic rationalism (with its emphasis on education as training to service economic growth). There is little doubt, as Luke (1992a p. 5) acknowledges, that:

> competence with literate practices enables economic and political engagement with mainstream ... culture.

However there is little evidence that the hoped for economic benefits eventuate, or that, at an individual or minority group level, an improved future comes with literacy achievement. Indeed, as Wickert (1992 p.147) suggests, there is overwhelming evidence to the contrary:

> evidence that points to the use of literacy as a means of social or institutional control, evidence that universal education does not lead to a just and democratic society, evidence that schooling does not value and teach a critical and questioning attitude, evidence that 'getting' literacy will not get a job, that literacy will not grant more influence or power to those who have been denied influence and power by virtue of their race, their class, their gender, their sexual orientation or their nationality ...

Such refutation of the myths of literacy, or of what is claimed for literacy, is reinforced by Harman and Edelsky (in Comber 1992 p. 3):

> The consequences of literacy have always been related to how it is used and what it is used for, what value is placed on it, and who is permitted to become literate. Although one of the powerful meanings surrounding literacy in the Western world today is a belief in its liberating power, in fact literacy is a necessary but hardly sufficient passport to the mainstream. If other stigmata - such as colour, sex, or class - betray one's membership in a subordinate culture, one may not be able to talk (or read or write) one's way across the frontier.

In line with such beliefs a number of other authors argue for a literacy that is

> productive, active and critical, potentially disruptive and oriented to change in society
> (Traves in Woods 1992 p. 53)

Lankshear (in Woods 1992 p. 85) agrees with such sentiments and argues for a 'proper literacy' which

> enhances people's control over their lives and their capacity for dealing rationally with decisions enabling them to identify, understand, and act to transform, social relations and practices in which power is structured unequally.

The above constructions of literacy are consistent with Freire's belief that:

> Illiteracy is one of the concrete expressions of an unjust social reality. Illiteracy is not a strictly linguistic or exclusively pedagogical or methodological problem. It is political.
> (in Wickert 1992 p. 153)

The above constructions and definitions all operate at the level of policy or academic debate. What then is the situation at the classroom level, at the level of pedagogy or methodology? This project attempts to address such questions.

The NSW CABE (TAFE 1988) curriculum devotes four short paragraphs to 'Literacy' and states that literacy is a relative concept which means different things to different people. It warns teachers not to assume that "their level of literacy is the necessary level." (CABE Manual Section 1 p. 6) It also suggests that:

> Learners should be able to choose the reading and writing materials they want. No value judgement should come from the teachers because the values we place on good and bad literature come from our own value system.

Is there an underlying assumption here that the teacher would consider the student choice less than satisfactory, and needs to be warned against using her own value judgements as standards? There is no acknowledgment of the notion of 'teacher as expert' or of the institutional power of the teacher. This is in keeping with the educational discourse of liberal progressivism, which was referred to previously. One of the results of such a discourse is that the teacher conceals her own expertise and may

> repress her own knowledge in order for the 'good personal relationship' to be possible.
> (Lee & Wickert 1995 p. 62)

This 'good personal relationship' is thought to be important because of the type of students who enrol in the course who typically have experienced failure at school, interrupted schooling or schooling for a relatively short period. Lack of confidence is just as evident as lack of skills. The CABE curriculum stresses the importance of increasing self esteem and encouraging educational independence. The teacher, as well as supporting students in their stated literacy goals should also make learners aware

> of the increased options in life that literacy can provide.
> There is a middle point of satisfying learners current needs for literacy while also broadening their future horizons.
> (CABE Manual Section 1 p. 6)

This discussion of literacy is preceded in the document by a list of Reading, Writing, Speaking, Listening and Study Skills[1]. These skills are conceivably an implicit acknowledgment of 'expert knowledge'as reflected by the curriculum.

In summary, the CABE curriculum constructs literacy as a relative concept, consistent with the definition given in the White Paper. It also constructs the literacy student as educationally disadvantaged, having experienced failure

at school and lacking in confidence and skills. There is little evidence of the broader, political, Freirean idea of literacy. The curriculum is located in the humanist educational discourse which highlights the primacy of the individual, the interchangeability of the teacher and learner as adults and the 'naturalness' of this interaction. It does not take into account the "institutional nature of the contract between them" (Lee & Wickert 1995 p. 61).

Such notions of literacy as constructed in the curriculum, are consistent with those of the teacher in this study. She believes that literacy is more than reading and writing and emphasises the personal growth aspect and the importance of developing student confidence and making them independent.[2]

The notions of literacy that arose implicitly during the interviews with students are also consistent with the personal growth model. A recurring theme is confidence and a belief that literacy (or success at TAFE) will improve their futures.[3]

Our own beliefs about literacy lie closest to those of Lankshear (noted previously) and what has come to be thought of as 'critical' literacy.
The preceding discussion of the context of the project (background and definitions of literacy) leads to discussion of what methodology was used to investigate this particular learning/teaching situation. The next section discusses choice of methodology and outlines how the data was collected and analysed.

---

[1] A list of these skills is given in Section 4.2 of the report.
[2] More information about the teacher is given in Section 4.1 of the report.
[3] A description of the interviews with students is also given in Section 4.1.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Choice of Methodology

The choice of research methodology is more than a technical issue; it is a moral and political issue (Goodson and Walker in Nunan 1992 p. 58). The methodology chosen in this research project draws on ethnography and is based on a case study, classroom observations, interviews with teachers and students and samples of students' work. This method was chosen as the most appropriate for both the subject matter and the participants because it can represent and interpret the richness and complexity of people's experiences at the same time as providing some explanation of the relationship between them and the social structure of the classroom.

Case study research is appropriate for educational research because it allows for the dynamic nature of educational situations. It is an intensive description and analysis of a phenomenon (Merriam & Simpson 1989). It provides a rich or thick description of what is happening and enables the researcher to track vertical dimensions (in this case through classroom observations and interviews) and horizontal dimensions (student progress).

Case study research is an examination of an 'instance in action', a bounded system. As such it identifies and describes basic phenomena and provides a basis for subsequent theory development (Kerry & Groteleushcen in Jennings 1986 p. 11). Within this bounded system, issues are indicated, discovered or studied so that a reasonably full understanding of the case is possible (Adelman et al 1976 in Deakin 1987 p. 1-9):

> At its best case study allows the reader to judge the implications of a study for himself [sic]

The case study offers a surrogate experience and invites readers to underwrite the account by appealing to tacit knowledge of human situations. It should be identifiable by the reader, ie the kinds of issues, problems, paradoxes, conflicts, situations and events portrayed should ring true (Walker 1980 in Deakin 1987 p. 11-17). In fact this is one measure of validity: that the portrayal of reality fits with the reader's own experience. "Truth" is guaranteed by the 'shock of recognition' (Adelman et al 1976 in Deakin 1987 p. 4-7).

Case studies which are highly persuasive to a primary audience (practitioners) however, are not so persuasive to secondary audiences (policy or decision makers). But when descriptive or personal data is missing from a research report, then those taking decisions will 'fill in' from their own

experience (Walker 1980 in Deakin 1987). This is particularly important for adult literacy research because of the complexity of the many 'literacies' in circulation in different contexts. There is general agreement in academic circles of Luke's (1992b p. 3) statement that literacy

> is a social practice, comprised of interpretive rules and events constructed and learned in institutions like schools and churches, families and workplaces.

There are no universal 'skills' of reading which are independent of context. However, if allowed, funding bodies and others typically 'fill in' the gaps with more traditional, functional definitions of literacy which are not necessarily in line with what academics and practitioners (the primary audience) believe.

The structural and historical forces that inform the classrooms under observation also need to be acknowledged as they help constitute the cultural dynamic. Situations (classroom observations) are isolated in time, but are not outside time. The social and historical factors impinging on adult literacy classrooms at the moment are multitudinous (national training reform agenda, increasing vocationalisation, competency based curricula, the increasing focus on literacy as an economic imperative).

> Ethnography must always be understood as discourse situated in time and place and as authored by humans participating in a discourse of their own.
> (Quantz & O'Connor 1988 p. 108)

Three projects in recent years in the adult literacy and language field to employ case study methodology have been: *The Pedagogical Relations between ESL and Adult Literacy* (Hammond et al 1992a), *Pedagogy and Politics: Developing ethnic-inclusive practices in the ALBE profession* (Davison et al 1993) and *Adults Learning Literacy in Groups* (Grant 1991).

2.2 Data Collection Procedures

2.2.1 The participants

Data was collected from the teacher and 9 students of a CABE English class in an outer Sydney TAFE college. The teacher and 3 students were interviewed.

The participants were selected in the following way: the Principal Officer, TAFE, responsible for CABE and Reading and Writing for Adults (RAWFA),

was approached for information about colleges with predominantly native speakers of English. A letter was sent to Senior Head Teachers or Head Teachers in 6 outer Sydney colleges asking if they would like to be involved in the project. 2 colleges responded positively. Both were found to be unsuitable on investigation for logistical reasons. An alternative was sought in another college, using personal contacts.

Initially CABE students involved in a Research and Study Skills elective were sought as it was thought they could actively participate in the research process and make it a part of their elective. This was in line with a commitment towards critical ethnography where participants are actively engaged in the research design and process, with the emphasis on change. However, this proved unfeasible. Finding people prepared to be involved in a research project in the right place at the right time proved difficult enough without complicating the matter any further.

One of the criticisms of case study research (Walker in Deakin 1987 p. 13) is that it is essentially conservative.

> ... it is in the nature of the case study to embalm what is established practice by describing it

To a certain extent, that criticism could be levelled at this particular case study, in that no obvious change occurred in the lives or practices of the participants as a result of their involvement with the project. However, readers of the case study can identify with certain practices and learn from others, and hopefully be able to develop theories about adult literacy learning and teaching.

The students who were interviewed were suggested by their teachers as being possibly willing to participate, and because some had articulated from RAWFA to CABE and were thus considered 'successful' students. Their experiences with TAFE had been over an extended period of time, ie twelve months, and this was considered beneficial to the longitudinal nature of the project.

2.2.2 Data collected

Data collected included classroom observations (2 x 3 hours) plus semi-structured interviews, with field notes and audio recordings. Samples of student work and samples of teacher lesson plans, notes, OHTs and handouts were also collected. This written data was summarised chronologically (See App. I for examples) as accurately as possible and includes original expression and grammar. From these summaries,

categories of activities or tasks were identified and counted. In this way recurring themes could emerge. (See Section 4.4)

The observations were made by the field researcher - an aspirant participant in Stenhouse's (1981 p. 21) terms, where the researcher seeks to create acceptance of an unusual participant role. Hammersly and Atkinson (1983 p. 11) talk about the reflexive character of social research and the influence of the participant observer on the setting studied. The conclusions drawn from the data are by no means necessarily valid for that setting at other times. The field researcher is part of the social world that is being studied and brings her own discourses to the event.

The interviews were semi-structured or focused and audio-taped which was explained to the interviewees as a way to aid memory, so not everything had to be written down. This was accepted by them. Students talked about their schooling, their attitudes to learning, how they were going in their classes, what sorts of things (literacy tasks/events) they were doing in class and what sorts of things they were reading and writing outside the class. The atmosphere was friendly and relaxed. The students appeared to be accepting of the questions and it was possible to maintain a dialogue, a conversation, rather than a strict question/answer format. This is thought to aid the flow of information.

The interviews with the teacher were also conducted as a dialogue, a reflection on that particular session and what she had been trying to achieve. Questions were also asked about her background and training, teaching experience, professional development activities, views on literacy and what she sees as her role in the classroom. Any problems or issues about the curriculum were also raised and discussed.

It is important to protect the anonymity of the teacher and the students and all attempts have been made to do this by deleting any reference to names of people or colleges.

The draft report was sent to the teacher for checking and approval to ensure face validity. According to Reason & Rowan

> Good research .... goes back to the subject with the tentative results, and refines them in the light of the subjects' reactions.
> (in Lather 1986 p. 67)

The above is a brief description of the data collection procedures. The following section outlines the theoretical frameworks which were used to interpret and analyse the data.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A number of theories or frameworks were used to interpret and analyse the data, namely:

- The Teaching-Learning Cycle
- Freebody & Luke's Four Reader Roles
- Wells' Five Levels of Engagement with Text
- Christie's Curriculum Genre
- The CABE English 1 Assessing Writing Guidelines
- Navarra's Writing Assessment Guidelines

Firstly, the Teaching-Learning Cycle (adapted from Callaghan and Rothery, 1988) in Hammond (1992b p. 17) which draws on Halliday's theory of language as a social construct, as a resource for making meaning. Activities summarised from the teacher's written records were categorised according to the four stages in the teaching-learning cycle:

1. Building the context or field of the topic or text-type
2. Modelling the genre under focus
3. Joint construction of the genre
4. Independent construction of the genre

These are discussed in Section 4.4. These activities were also analysed in terms of the four reader roles identified by Freebody and Luke (1990) and are also discussed in Section 4.4. These ideas have been expanded in the project to include writing as well as reading. The four roles are :

1. code breaker (coding competence - how do I crack this?), the orthographic dimension of reading and writing; phonics, letter knowledge and spelling skills.

2. text participant (semantic competence - what does this mean?), the lexico-grammatical level where the reader uses knowledge of the topic and the generic structures of text to construct a meaning which

reciprocates the intentions of the writer. The reader draws on a stock of knowledge built up from prior readings of texts which are culture specific.

3. text user (pragmatic competence - what do I do with this, here and now?) In the classroom structured language games occur around text, such as turn-taking procedures, what can be said about a text, by whom and when. Students are instructed through a display of what counts as reading in the here and now. They use text to meet the particular purposes of the classroom, or work or home.

4. text analyst (critical competence - what does all this do to me?), the ideological level where the reader is positioned within an ideological perspective. Written texts are not neutral; they actively construct and represent the world.

Wells (in Booth & Thornley-Hall 1991) proposes a framework which in many ways complements that of Freebody and Luke. He suggests that there are 5 levels of engagement with text:

1. the performative - encoding/decoding (Freebody & Luke's code breaker)

2. the functional - bank, timetable, notes (Freebody & Luke's text user)

3. the informational - reference books, routine report, questionnaire (Freebody & Luke's text participant & text user)

4. the re-creational - imaginative literature, 'expressive' writing, letters to friends, personal journal (Freebody & Luke's text participant & text user)

5. epistemic - interpreting meaning, provoking understanding, 'Is the text internally consistent?' 'Does it make sense in relation to my own experience?' (Freebody & Luke's text analyst).

Wells investigated the types of engagements that occur in school classrooms and found that they were typically performative, with some functional (although this was rarely given explicit attention), informational and re-creational (although with novels the emphasis was often on literal comprehension (performative) and the drawing of inferences predetermined by the teacher).

He also found that students' own extended writing of an imaginative or discursive kind is, by the way in which it is responded to by the teacher, reduced to an occasion for attention to spelling and punctuation (Wells 1991 p. 54). This was supported by the data collected in this project and examples

are given in the 'Teacher's Comments on Student Writing' in App. I.

Wells claims that students do not need to have fully mastered the code and the information contained in the text in order to begin to interact with it epistemically. This is in line with Freebody & Luke's argument that the role of text analyst is not in a hierarchical relationship to the other roles, but can, and should, be engaged in from the beginning of any interaction with text.

The classroom observations were analysed using Christie's concept of curriculum genre (in Cope & Kalantzis 1993). Curriculum can be seen as a goal driven, social activity structured through language. She identifies two registers in this genre: a pedagogical register which gives structure and purpose to the particular teaching/learning strategy and a content register. Effective teaching, she suggests, occurs when the two registers converge for a sustained period of time. (See Section 4.3)

Samples of student writing from the beginning, middle and end of the course were also analysed according to the criteria used in the CABE Manual Section 1 p. 110:

1. Are the ideas clearly expressed?

2. Are the ideas related directly to the task/question?

3. Is there reasonable sentence construction?

4. Is the writing organised in paragraphs?

5. Do spelling or syntactical errors hinder meaning?

These same criteria were also given by the teacher to the students in the fourth session as an overhead titled 'Written Work Checklist'. These criteria are consistent with, though not as developed, as those used by Navara (1992 p. 7):

1. Communicative effect on the reader -the extent to which the intended audience would get the message

2. Text structure - the ability to use appropriate layout, the ability to appropriately organise ideas, the ability to produce a cohesive text

3. Language features - appropriate control of grammatical structures and vocabulary

4. Surface features - appropriate use of upper/lower case letters and punctuation, spelling, accurate for the task and does not hinder meaning

The above frameworks informed the interpretation and analysis of the data and are elaborated on in more detail at various stages of the case study, which is the subject of the following section.

4. THE CABE CASE STUDY

The case study is made up of data from:

- interviews with the participants (teacher and students)
- the curriculum document
- analysis of student writing.

4.1 The participants: the teacher

Moira is a secondary trained teacher, specialising in English and Physical Education (which is where she claims her excellent organising skills come from!). She taught in high schools for eighteen years and began volunteer tutoring in ESOL in 1986 and continued for two years until she began working in ABE. She worked as a part-time ABE teacher from 1988 to 1990 and began full time ABE work in 1991. Moira completed the Graduate Diploma in TESOL at UTS in 1989 and was particularly influenced at this time by Dorothy Brown (the then lecturer in the TESOL course) who has been one of the major influences in her professional development.
Moira regularly attends Australian Council for Adult Literacy (ACAL) conferences and in-services. In 1993 she went to workshops on Accelerative Learning, a TAFE Marketing conference, Providing Tutorial Support, Reaccreditation of CABE, Dealing with ATY (Accredited Training for Youth), Integration of Literacy & Numeracy (Maths in Context) and Cross-skilling ABE & ESOL.

Moira's professional reading consists of *Literacy & Numeracy Exchange, ALIO Broadsheet* and *Update* and *ESOL - Western Sydney Connections.*
She has also read a number of resource books recently, focussing on classroom practice (eg *English for Social Purposes* (Hammond et al. 1992b) which she refers on to staff in her section. Moira is actively involved in staff development at her college and recently gave a workshop on Accelerative Learning. She is a member of the NSW Adult Literacy & Numeracy Council, ACAL and the Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Action Coalition (ALBSAC).

In her ABE work, Moira aims to make students independent so that they can pick up skills and transfer them; she aims to nurture confidence; tries to promote a safe haven for students to ask questions - of the teacher and of

themselves. There is an emphasis on process; on drafting and re-drafting; on building on experience and students' developing opinions. She encourages students to write their thoughts down and talk about various issues. She hopes students will develop problem solving skills so that they can deal with things that 'crop up'. [This however was not reflected explicitly in any of the other data.] She teaches them to recognise different genres, to use different reading processes - ie skimming, scanning, reading for detail etc. She tries to introduce texts in the classroom with a local flavour, that relate to students' immediate situations. She avoids relying on text books, preferring to use everyday texts which she thinks students find more relevant. She thinks it important to reduce student anxiety, so that they're not scared when they confront a new text or a new situation. She hopes that they will be able to cope with different levels and different types of reading and writing. She uses pair work to develop confidence and reduce anxiety. She believes that students should actively take part and participate in their learning.

The CABE curriculum, with its final exam, is problematic in her eyes. The listening task, in her opinion, is not an authentic task: *When do we have to do such a thing in real life?* However, there is a lot to choose from in the exam so that colleges can choose to suit their own context.

Moira is constantly listening for something wrong in the classroom, ie she is constantly checking and negotiating with students about the program and how they're going. She believes that teaching/learning is a team effort.

Moira believes that literacy is more than reading and writing. It is about survival and operates at different levels. Hopefully what students do in class will transfer to the outside. This view of literacy is consistent with the *Australian Language and Literacy Policy* (DEET 1991) definition outlined on p. 3. There is nothing in the observations or the written data to suggest a contrary view although the link to Australia's social and economic goals is not strong. The emphasis is more on personal growth.

On the basis of the above information from the interview with Moira and from the observations and written data, it is possible to locate her in the humanist, liberal progressive discourse of personal growth (Lee & Wickert 1995). This discourse sees

> language as a means of expressing and exploring personal power, as promoting the progress of society through the progress of the individual learner
> (Bradshaw 1992 p.5)

This discourse was typical of adult literacy education in the 1980s with its emphasis on the primacy of the individual. Moira's comments and the data

from the observations and the written material suggest that she would agree with the list of principles collated in Lee & Wickert 1995 p. 58:

- student-centred and student-directed learning;
- curriculum based on student needs;
- concern with student as a whole person;
- use student experience as a resource for teaching;
- negotiate learning with student;
- relevant and purposeful learning activities;
- no external assessment;
- learning which develops student independence;
- reflection;
- student is active participant;
- open access and flexible provision;
- small group learning.

However what this discourse fails to do is acknowledge the power relations between teacher and learner, between teacher and institution and learner and institution. It

> refrains from stressing any fundamental re-structuring of institutions or power blocs
> (Bradshaw 1992 p. 6)

There is

> a refusal to acknowledge or attend to the social differences between teacher and learner that are inscribed within their different institutional positions
> (Lee & Wickert 1995 p. 62)

Part of this humanist discourse is an assumption of the 'naturalness' of the teacher-learner relationship with an assertion that both are adults and share a common humanity. This is evidenced in both the observation data and Moira's written comments on student writing. There is continuous evidence

of inclusive interpersonal language to reduce the distance between teacher and learner through the repeated use of the personal pronoun "we", both in spoken language:

... we spoke about joiners, joining words

... share what we're doing

Remember we put things in boxes

... we'd better all come together

Now what have we got onto here?

... we're not going into length now

We'll just look as far as you've got ...

What we'll do now ...

and in written feedback on students' writing:

... We'll work on developing these skills further.

... Maybe we need to work on developing those ideas.

... - we just need to look at paragraphs etc.

... We just need to look at working on some spelling and punctuation.

... We will work on your tenses.

... We still need to look at paragraphing.

... We will be working on trying to use other words instead of repeating.

Moira works to foster confidence and self esteem in the learners by showing respect for their writing. She begins her written feedback with a positive comment and addresses students by name, before making any comment on grammar or punctuation or paragraphing:

Lyn, your writing is much more relaxed. A good start.

John, This is a good piece of writing - it's clear and easy to read.

Peter, Your ideas are good;

Well done, Lyn.

Vera, short but okay.

She thanks the students for their writing which further serves to reinforce the personal aspect of the relationship between teacher and student, in keeping with the humanist, liberal progressive discourse mentioned earlier.

The students

The students were suggested by the teacher for involvement in the project because of their experiences with TAFE over a period of time. They all readily agreed to be interviewed.

Lyn

Lyn is in her early forties. She began RAWFA three years ago and was also doing a correspondence course. She began CABE in July 1992 but wasn't ready for it and went back to RAWFA until the end of the year. In 1993 she gave CABE another try.

Lyn says that she couldn't spell; she could read words but sometimes couldn't understand what they meant. Now she thinks she can spell better and can understand what she reads. Sometimes, though, she still has a bit of trouble. She is also not as shy as she used to be. She used to be really scared. She now writes to an aunt in England and a friend in another suburb, who she previously rang. She can also send Christmas cards now, address envelopes and fill in some forms. These are examples of Well's (1991) performative, functional and re-creational levels of engagement with text and reveal literacy practices being used outside the classroom.

Lyn is interested in working with children in the future, particularly children with Down's syndrome (one of her sisters has Down's syndrome). She is thinking about doing a child care course in a year or so. Ideally she would like to do the course by correspondence so that she could bring the work in and get help at TAFE.

I'd rather not get myself into a situation where I can't do it.

Lyn is very interested in football and follows her team avidly in the newspaper and on TV. Anything to do with football or her team, she can read

about for hours.

Lyn has joined the local library, but mainly uses the one at TAFE. She likes to read stories about real people, not fiction, *stories about people's life.*

Lyn thinks that CABE is harder than RAWFA because of the number of different subjects. She is not fond of maths.

Lyn's schooling experience was traumatic (similar to many ABE students). She missed the first six months of high school because of kidney and liver problems and the school told her mother it wasn't 'worth the while'; to leave her at home. So home is where she stayed, helping her mother who in turn tried to help her with reading. She never went to high school at all.

The headmaster told them it wouldn't be worth their trouble, for me to go.

Lyn was constantly told *you wouldn't be able to do it anyway* and as she says so eloquently now, it is very hard to *get rid of that not doing anything if you don't think you can.*

Her primary years of schooling were fraught with ridicule and anxiety to the point where she would do anything to avoid going - even throw herself off the back step, so that her mother was forced to keep her at home because of her injuries.

Lyn is full of praise for Moira as a teacher. She admits that she was terrified about coming to TAFE but was reassured by the staff and now wishes she had started when she was a lot younger.

[Lyn passed her CABE exam but because of ill health was not able to go on to further study at this stage. She had enrolled in Office Skills and may, if her health allows, take this up next year.]

The overwhelming sense coming from Lyn was the development in her confidence and self esteem. The classroom observations also revealed this as she participated in activities, answered questions, asked questions and interacted with fellow students in an apparently confident way.

John

John had been coming to RAWFA for two years, referred by the Commonwealth Employment Service (CES). He is 21 and left school in Year 9. He got in with the wrong crowd at school and always had trouble reading. In primary school his problem was recognised and help was given, but in

high school he was considered to be lazy. He got a job when he was 15 packing in a supermarket (the only job he has had). He has been married for two years and his wife tries to help him. She used to fill in all the forms but he does them himself now. He feels he has grown in confidence and now has a go. To learn something, John says that he reads it and reads it and reads it until he remembers it.

John is interested in cars and has used what he's learned here in car manuals and magazines to fix them. He would like eventually to do a mechanics course, but needs to do the Certificate in General Education (CGE) first (he needs to do this at another college where it is offered full time so that he can claim Austudy). He is reasonably confident of getting an apprenticeship because he knows a lot of mechanics;
it

> *shouldn't be too hard getting a job in a garage.*

John uses the library for reference books, not novels. He reads the local newspaper and the *Telegraph*. He doesn't use the TV guide very much because he knows what's on.

John is motivated and stresses that you need to want to learn, to work and to practise. He is concerned with working out

> *what you want to do for the rest of your life.*

After he has done the mechanics course he is interested in going back to tech. to become an architect. (That's what my Dad is.) Both he and his wife have a lot of studying ahead of them, as she wants to go back to tech. when John gets a job (she is currently working and expecting a baby in July).

> *I want to make a success out of life; don't want to be on the dole and stuff like that.*

John is happy with the course; he can get one-to-one help if he needs it and gets along with everyone in the group. He wouldn't change anything.

[John passed the CABE and has gone on to CGE at another college. He is now a proud father.]

The classroom observation supported what John said in his interview. He plays an important role in the group, was often deferred to and seemed well liked, often joking with other students.

Vera

Vera is 36 and has been coming to TAFE since the beginning of the year. She has not done RAWFA, but started in CABE, with the focus on improving her maths. She left school in Year 9 and always found Maths a problem, not so much English. She was picked on at school.

Vera worked in the courts for a time as a typist but has no full time job ambitions as she needs to be at home with her husband who is a semi-invalid (epileptic). She is planning to go on to the CGE next year and perhaps eventually do her Higher School Certificate (HSC).

Interestingly, Vera does not see a great deal of difference in teaching styles between her school and TAFE. She is satisfied that she is making progress and is happy to continue in the same vein. She thinks that her maths is improving, things like percentages, shopping, times tables.

Vera likes to read crime mysteries , true stories like *Fatal Shore* and has no trouble filling in forms. She borrows from the library and has lots of books at home. She writes to friends, but not often and reads newspapers and magazines like the *Women's Weekly* and the TV guide.

To try and remember things (for a maths test for example), Vera writes things down and practises them. She reads things through and tries to remember them.

[Vera also passed her CABE and resumed her home duties in Semester 2. She is planning to go into CGE.]

Each of the students interviewed reveals a belief in literacy which is fairly functional; a literacy that will lead to increased further education or job opportunities. Apart from Vera, there is little reading for pleasure at home. News and current affairs come from television or radio; the newspaper is read mainly for sport. Lyn in particular, attests to growth in confidence as a result of coming to TAFE. There is little evidence of a more critical dimension (Freebody & Luke's 1990 text analyst role or Wells' 1991 epistemic level of engagement with text), which is not surprising given the curriculum and the pedagogy they encounter at TAFE. The most frequent engagements are at the performative, functional and informational levels.

The teacher and students come together in the context of the CABE classroom to teach and learn 'literacy', or more specifically in this case, English 1. One of the key factors influencing this teaching/learning situation is the curriculum document which constructs literacy in a particular way.

The following section outlines how this is done.

4.2 The CABE Curriculum

The Certificate in Adult Basic Education (CABE) is a full-time course (20 hours per week) for 18 weeks. The course was designed for adults who have been educationally disadvantaged in our society and who wish to study full-time, improve their literacy and numeracy skills, go on to further education, or get a job. Learning new skills often depends on personal confidence, self esteem and independence, which the course also aims to develop. (CABE Manual p. 1).

The subject English 1, which is the focus of this research project, has the following objectives:

> On completion of this subject students should be able to:-
>
> 1. read a variety of descriptive, narrative and factual materials from different adult contexts;
>
> 2. express ideas clearly in writing to meet a variety of personal and social needs;
>
> 3. express fluently a variety of spoken language modes such as questioning, telephone skills, stating opinions, telling anecdotes, etc.;
>
> 4. listen to spoken English to extract the main points and specific details relevant to the communication process;
>
> 5. organise course materials and study time effectively and use libraries and resources including dictionaries, with confidence.
> (CABE Manual Section 1 p. 3)

In the Preamble, (p. 3) the desirability of student input and decision making is stressed. Increase in self esteem and educational independence are to be encouraged.

A list of the following skills is given:

> **1. Reading**
>
> A wide variety of descriptive, narrative and factual material to develop the following skills:
>
> - reading for pleasure

- skimming
- scanning
- predicting
- sequencing
- reading for the main idea
- reading for specific details
- vocabulary development

2. Writing

A variety of writing experiences to include:
- narrating and describing
- explaining
- giving instructions
- giving opinions
- completing a story
- producing complete sentences
- organising ideas into paragraphs
- vocabulary development

3. Speaking

- describing a person/place/event
- giving instructions
- asking questions
- giving an opinion
- developing telephone skills
- practising interview skills
- vocabulary development

4. Listening

- listening for main idea
- listening for details
- following instructions
- taking messages
- distinguishing speaker's tone
- identifying register
- accurate listening
- vocabulary development
- distinguishing fact and opinion

5. Study Skills

- organising time and material
- using library
- using dictionary/thesaurus
- developing note taking and summarising skills

- preparing for essay writing

6. Other areas specified as important by the student

The picture that emerges here is that of a student developing confidence, self esteem and independence, along with the above skills that can be used in a variety of situations. Presumably, once these skills have been acquired, a person is then 'literate'.

There is a strong emphasis on learners choosing the reading and writing materials they want as if this is 'naturally' good and automatically beneficial. Indeed there is a strong claim that

> No value judgement should come from the teachers because the values we place on good and bad literature come from our own value system. (CABE Manual Section 1 p. 6)

Note the slippage here from 'literacy' to 'literature'. (It is unclear whether this is inadvertent or not.) However the document qualifies the above claim by urging teachers to not only support students in their stated literacy goals, but to make them aware

> of the increased options in life that literacy can provide.
>
> There is a middle point of satisfying learners' current needs for literacy while also broadening their future horizons. (CABE Manual Section 1 p. 6)

However, as noted in the Introduction, there are no guarantees, at an individual or minority group level, of futures that come with literacy development.

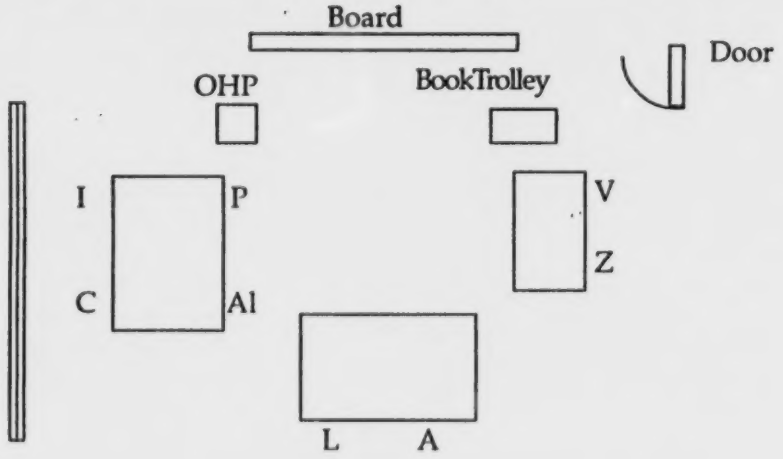
Applying Freebody & Luke's (1990) model of the four reader roles to this curriculum, it is apparent that the text analyst role is minimal, if not absent entirely. Similarly with Well's (1991) five levels of engagement, there is very little engagement at the epistemic level. However, it must be stated that Freebody & Luke and Wells were writing after the CABE curriculum was developed and it may therefore be unfair to say that something is absent when the information or framework was not available. However, it does still highlight what is missing from this curriculum and what may need to be addressed in the future. If Freebody & Luke and Wells' frameworks are accepted as valid, then in the future it is important to ensure that all roles or engagements with text are present in curriculum documents, teachers' repertoires and students' own understandings of what it means to learn literacy.

The two classroom observations which were made bear out what has been said so far, that the literacy operating in this situation is at the performative, functional, informational and sometimes re-creational levels of engagement. Data from the observations is the focus of the next section.

4.3 The Observations

Two observations were made during the research, one in Week 5 and the second in Week 12. The first thing to note when observing a classroom is the physical environment which has an important effect on the learning situation.

The room is pleasant, recently painted, newly carpeted and furnished, with natural light. There are nine students (6 females, 3 males) grouped at tables - in twos, threes, fours. There is a blackboard, an overhead projector (OHP) and a reading trolley. (The reading trolley contains a variety of books, c. 100, including dictionaries, novels, short stories, reference books, biographies, factual texts; all relatively new and adult in appearance and content.



Audio recordings and field notes supplied the material for description and analysis. What was observed and recorded in these two sessions is consistent with the detailed records that the teacher supplied of her planning notes, OHTs and handouts and in her interview. The material, tasks and activities were in keeping with the curriculum and the atmosphere was friendly and relaxed. Students felt confident to participate, ask questions, discuss, joke and make suggestions. The teacher was observed guiding, supporting, organising and explaining.

Using Christie's (Cope & Kalantzis 1993) framework of curriculum genre, the following pattern of staged curriculum events could be said to typify this particular CABE classroom. The written data reflect such a pattern as well:

1. Lesson initiation	an informal chatting (between teacher and students; students and students) while they arrive and settle
2. Warm-up activity	a recap/revision of previous session/s
3. Task orientation	the main topic/content area is introduced and discussed
4. Task specification	the actual writing task is defined
5. Break	5-10 minutes
6. Task 1	group construction of text
7. Review	class review of group texts
8. Break	5-10 minutes
9. Task 2	individual construction, which may be finished at home
10. Closing tasks	crossword/puzzle

Observation 1

An excerpt from the transcript of Observation 1 (App. II) has been selected to demonstrate in more detail Christie's concept of curriculum genre. Christie maintains that for effective teaching to occur, the pedagogical register (eg instructions, classroom management) and the content register (eg topic, language features, task) converge for sustained periods of time. The following excerpt from the second stage of the session demonstrates when and where this convergence occurs.

2. Warm-up activity:

	Transcript	Comments
9.05	A warm-up exercise looking at things in logical order. (Hands out cut up paragraphs.)	Task orientation. The pedagogical register is foregrounded as the teacher gets the activity going.
	Lyn if you'd like to work with Mary and Jack and Con work together	She organises who works with whom, depending on where students are sitting.
	It's a short article on a picnic	
	(Students work in pairs on the sequencing activity ... Moira wanders ... checking and helping)	The task specification stage is left implicit, based on student's previous experience of similar tasks.
	Right, look for Introduction and a build up to ( ). We spoke about joiners, joining words	Use of continuative ('right') to move students forward. Principal participants ('we') are the class members. Prior language features are referred to ('joiners'). These language features are in fact the 'content'.
	There are some pieces that might fit anywhere ... but there is definitely a beginning and an end	
	(Discussion within pairs about the best way to do it)	

	Transcript	Comments
Lyn to Moira:	*Is it all about the same thing?*	This question from the student reflects a certain confusion about the task which was evident in the observation.
Moira to Lyn	*Yeah, it's all about the same thing. ..... It's all paragraphs.*	
Ann	*It's all mixed up.*	This realisation came 10 minutes after the start of the activity and reveals that more time could have been spent on the task specification stage.
Moira	*Is anybody ready yet?* (No response - still trying to sort it out; conversations and some laughter)	The teacher attempts with this question to move the activity along or to begin closure and moves back to the pedagogical register.
Ann	*That's the subject.*	
Moira	*Tell me when you've had enough and we'll check ...* (Students continue, trying various alternatives)	Again the teacher attempts to close.
Moira	*We'll see how far you've got, OK? It was quite hard because it was a long one.*	Teacher seeks with the continuative ('OK') to close the activity. She also uses the attributive process ('was') in giving a reason for the difficulty of the task.
	(Groups still trying to finish.)	

	Transcript	Comments
	When you've done it..?	
	(Groups still working.)	The teacher is still attempting to close the activity but students are still working.
Ann	*That's it, that's it. Finished!*	The student finally effects closure.
9.25 Moira:	*Let's have a look at it.* (Class comes together; solution is put on OHP)	Further use of the personal participant ('us') by the teacher which builds the interpersonal element
	Let's look at what made it easier in some spots and what made it more difficult ... logical order? ... introduce the subject ... what have we talked about? (Moira writing on board.).. *What gives it the logic?*	The pedagogical and content registers converge here.
Jason:	*Paragraphs!*	
Moira:	*Yeah, yeah..... what else did we mention?*	Students respond and teacher prompts for more, drawing on their prior knowledge.
Lyn:	*joining words?*	
Moira:	*Yes, joining words ...* (writes on board) ... *Present tense, what tenses have they used?*	

	Transcript	Comments
Moira	*How have they presented what they want to say? Can you see any point and then further and further discussion on that point? What about one?*	The personal participant ('they') is used to represent the writer of the text
Lyn	*Children are ...*	
Moira	*Children are what?*	
Ann	*Pigs!* (Laughter. ...)	
Moira	(Voice slightly raised, reads from text) ... *You will feel ...* (Zoe finishes reading the sentence.)	The teacher raises her voice to regain students' attention (rather than using a command or a continuative)
Moira:	*What about we look at here ... the statement ... what have they said about food?* *What sort of food?*	
	Well point four (reads from text) ... *what else? Whatever they've said they then say a bit more about it. So you can't just make a statement and leave it. All right? ... All right, ...when you're writing ...we'll leave that just now.* (Collects pieces of paper.)	Closure The continuative ('all right?') seeks confirmation from the students that they have understood. The second 'all right' marks the closure of the activity which is reinforced by the final statement and the collection of the papers.

The above excerpt is only a small part of the three hour session. In itself however, it reflects the following stages: task orientation, task specification, task operation and closure, before moving to another stage of the curriculum genre. The task orientation and specification stages are brief because

students have done this type of sequencing activity before (however because of the length of this particular text, students had difficulty sequencing it; the cumulative growth of knowledge was perhaps overestimated). The transcript also reveals the teacher's use of personal participants to reduce the distance between herself and her students (the interpersonal function). It also reveals that although the teacher controls or chooses the activity, the students control to a certain extent how long they will work on it (A. in this instance effected closure, after the teacher had been trying for a number of minutes). The pedagogical and content registers converge at times, which is when, according to Christie, effective teaching occurs. The activity requires looking for particular aspects of language which have been introduced previously (joiners, paragraphs, beginning, middle, end, logical order). More specific language features (based on a functional grammar for example, like theme, lexical chains, referencing) which may have helped to sequence the text, are not taught. The above was only a small part of the session and not the main focus.

The main focus was on 'Opinion Writing'. (Refer to App. IV for the full transcript.) The task orientation stage where the pedagogical register was foregrounded briefly,

> *This is an article from last year ..... you've got arguments for and arguments against ....*

introduced the topic to be discussed. Discussion within the whole group continued for about 5 minutes with students contributing their opinions. The teacher used continuatives (right, OK) to move the discussion forward and refers students to the text (newspaper clippings).

She signals a move into the task specification stage (pedagogical register) with a slightly raised voice

> *Discuss in your group whether you agree or disagree with any of their points.....you'll need a secretary in each group.*

After 10 minutes, the teacher (again with a continuative OK) moves back to the pedagogical register briefly and the class discusses their responses (content register). A short break (stage 5) is called.

The next stage, Task 1, after the break, begins in the pedagogical register, with the teacher scaffolding on the board how students may structure their written texts. The content and pedagogical registers converge here as students attempt the task in small groups, then review (stage 7) what they have done as a whole group. The teacher moves the activity along with

continuatives (OK, next one, all right, good) and effects closure of the activity with

OK, you can have a short break, but don't move. (stage 8)

Often physical movement signals a change in the stages of a curriculum genre. In this case, collecting papers, giving out OHTs or giving out crosswords signals quite clearly a movement from one phase to another.

There is a further example in this particular observation where although the teacher has chosen the activity and controls the pace, it does not always remain in her control. After the students had been working on the crosswords for a short time, the teacher attempted to close with *All right, we'd best stop there .....* The students kept working on their crosswords until the teacher is forced to change to a more command-like closure *All right, leave the crosswords just now.....* This command needs to be repeated and directed to an individual *Ann just leave the crossword for five minutes.* The teacher's drawing on her authority is evidenced in the language choices she makes, moving from the inclusive personal participant (*us, we*) in the initial request to the specific participant (A) in the final command, accompanied by a rising tone of voice.

After the break, a further aspect of the task is specified (pedagogical register). Students now are to write individually (stage 9, Task 2). At this stage the social purpose of such a style of writing is discussed. The content register is foregrounded with discussion of various topics that *we could have a real fight about.* General advice is given about how to write, *organise your thoughts .....whatever statement you make, you've got to back it up.....*

The final phase of the session is signalled, in the pedagogical register with instructions for finishing the writing for homework and *we'll finish up with a word game.* Closure of the previous activity is reinforced by the handing out of the word game and '5-Minute Fiction' (stage 10).

Christie maintains that for teaching to be effective, the pedagogical and content registers should converge. There is evidence in this data that the two registers do converge at times. There is also evidence that writing tasks are being modelled on the board, and in small groups on OHTs. The language that is used to talk about language (metalanguage) however, remains fairly general - and visual - boxes, paragraphs, which is consistent with the curriculum. Remember that one of the questions in the students' 'Written Work Checklist' and in the CABE Assessing Writing Guidelines was:

Is the writing organised in paragraphs?

There was little evidence here, or in the written data, to suggest that paragraphs were explained in other than a visual way,

> to break up a large block of writing.
> (Written data, 1 March 1993)

Observation 2

The second observation in Week 12 was shorter than the first as the students were working in the library for the second half of the session, preparing for a short talk which was to be videoed and shown to the class as one of their assignments.

The session began with a discussion on spelling which recapped on the previous Wednesday's discussion. Students were asked to recall some of the things that had been said .....

Mary: *The word doesn't always look the way it sounds.*

Moira: *Can you think of any every day things ...?*

Mary: *Weetbix!*

Moira: *Yes.....*

Mary: *That's not the way to spell Weetbix, it's confusing kids.*

Moira: *All right .....*(writes Weetbix on board) *How do you spell wheat?*

Lyn: w-h-e-a-t

Moira writes wheat on board.

Moira: *Now if someone doesn't know how to spell that could confuse them.*

Lyn: *That's right.*

Moira: *Any other examples?.....*

Moira then shows an OHT which is a letter from a manufacturer responding to a letter from some school children about the confusing spelling of brand names. There is discussion of why advertisers change spelling in this way so that people identify with that brand. Moira asks

Where do you think it starts to go wrong?

She then hands out examples of brand names and their spellings. Students discuss the correct spelling and the use of abbreviations. Examples like Biz-quip, De-Solv-it, Kleenmaid, Centacare are talked about and Moira writes the correct spelling on the board. They are then given a photocopy of some junk mail and are asked to identify two spelling mistakes in brand names. "Whiskas" and "cheez" are identified and the correct spelling is written on the board.

Moira then tells them about the plan for working on their videos.

> *There's some good news and bad news. The good news is we've got time to plan our videos (everyone groans). The bad news is the library's not open til 10.*

The students complain in a light-hearted way; they are obviously reluctant to be videoed. They have talked about it in the previous week and preliminary work on the talk has been done. They are to work in the library to do more research into their chosen topics. In the meantime, Moira hands out a spelling puzzle page - 'ible or able', 'ph', 'gh', 'ff', 'f'. Students work on the sheets with discussion between themselves and referral to dictionaries when needed. After ten minutes Moira goes through the page with them as a whole group and students call out the answers. There is a short break, after which students are to go to the library to work on their talks.

The picture of the literacy classroom that emerges from the above data is one in which students are encouraged to participate in activities which are determined largely by the teacher, albeit trying to match these with the students' interests and needs. There is a variety of activities and material and tasks. The teacher generally controls the pace of the session and moves through a pattern of staged curriculum events. The students meanwhile are relaxed and trusting of the teacher and the environment. They are learning to be, and playing the role of, the student, without the negative experiences that many of them are familiar with from their previous schooling.

The observations reveal a rich learning situation consistent with the views of literacy expressed in the curriculum document and in the interviews with the teacher and students. They were however, only one source of data. Another important source of material was the teacher's planning notes, handouts and copies of student writing with teacher's comments. This material is the focus of the following section.

4.4 Categorisation of Data

The teacher's planning notes and handouts were arranged chronologically from 15 February to the 9 June, along with a summary of the Tasks/ Activities, the Teacher's Comments on Student Writing and Student Feedback (original spelling and grammar) which had been recorded in their 'How I Felt Today' sheets. An example of a summary is given below; further examples can be found in App. I.

15 February

Teacher's Planning Notes

- Opinion writing
- Warm up
  sequencing a short article 'Picnics'
  - looking at conjunctions & connecting ideas between paragraphs.
- Discussion - News Article
- Plan, brainstorm ideas
- Revise how to set out writing
- Writing in 2s on OHT
- Discuss
- Write own piece

OHTs/HOs

- Sets of cut up paragraphs to match - "The good picnic guide"
- HO - newspaper article "A casino for NSW - is it worth the gamble?"
- HO - Crossword (spelling demons and outlaws)
- HO - Trackdown
- HO - 5-Minute Fiction

Tasks/Activities

- Sequence the picnics article in small groups
- Write an opinion/exposition?? in pairs on OHTs

Student Feedback: "How I Felt About Today"

- *Lyn: Opinion writing went ok but I don't really understand as much as I did on Monday.*
- *John: am getting the hang of opinion witing it is just what I'm going to write I have a problem with*
- *Vera: Opinion writing Learning a lot about agreeing and disagreeing with various topics*

From the summaries, the tasks/activities were arranged into 33 categories and then re-arranged under the following broad headings:

1. Classroom management
2. Learning to learn
3. Resources
4. Writing
5. Reading
6. Games/puzzles

Activities were then counted according to each category. The results are summarised below. It must be stressed that the data only includes the teacher's written records. It does not reflect the variety of other activities, spoken, non-verbal and incidental, that inevitably occurred in the classroom.

1. Classroom management, incl. subject info 7

2. Learning to Learn 2

Most of the above activities occurred towards the beginning of the course.

3. Resources

- book trolley 1

Although appearing only once in the written records, the book trolley was frequently wheeled into the room.

- newspaper article as stimulus for discussion/writing 11

Newspaper articles were used frequently to stimulate discussion and writing. They were not necessarily current, but had been collected around certain themes.

- pictures as stimulus for discussion/writing 3
- tape " 1
- text " 3
- magazines " 3
- video " 2
- Thesaurus 1

4. Writing:

	Building the field through: communicative activities/discussion/ brainstorm/ board work	Modelling of text type	Schematic structure	Language features	Joint construction often on OHT, in pairs, threes	Individual construction
- opinion	3	1			1	7
- description	3	6		2		6
- discussion	2	1	1	3	1	1
- exposition		1	1	3	1	
- free writing						2
- book review	1	1	1			1
- film review	1		1			1
- creative writing						2
- literacy diary						1
- record sheets						24

The writing activities were in line with the genres or text types suggested in the curriculum.

Grammar						
- punctuation		3				3
- paragraphs		4	1			3

The main grammar focus was on paragraphs and punctuation, again, in line with the curriculum. Remember that one of the editing criteria outlined in the curriculum and given to students was: Is the writing organised in paragraphs?

- spelling	1	1				2
- drafting		1				3
- editing		1				
- revision	2					
- giving a talk	2	2	1			1

5. Reading activities

- Matching	1
- Prediction (cloze)	2
- Skimming	1
- Scanning	1
- Comprehension	3
- Vocabulary	4

Reading was usually a precursor to writing.

6. Games/puzzles

- Warm-up/icebreakers	2
- Wonderword	5
- 5-Minute Fiction	3
- Crossword - spelling	4
- general	1
- Trackdown	2

Games and puzzles were used often to conclude sessions or to give students a break from 'harder' tasks, such as writing.

The data reveals a rich teaching/learning cycle in line with the four stages outlined in Hammond et al (1992b p. 17):

1. Building the context or field of the topic or text-type
2. Modelling the genre under focus
3. Joint construction of the genre
4. Independent construction of the genre

The teacher is using a variety of activities and materials in line with the curriculum. The data from the planning notes and handouts is consistent with her interview and with what the students said in their interviews and in their 'How I Felt About Today' comments. These comments reveal a growing

awareness of their own skill development:

> *Lyn: Now I know where to put punctuation when there is talking. Great day.*
>
> *John: I learn't a lot about Punctuation & setting up Paragraphs.*
>
> *Vera: I learn't a lot about opinion writing & learning the arguments for and against.*

as well as many affective comments:

> *Lyn: Today was a great I enjoyed the work.*

Lyn's and John's comments reveal a fairly persistent belief that the work is 'hard'

> *Lyn : I think I will find this a bit hard.*
>
> *John : I found that it was hard and fustrating*
>
> *Lyn: Opinion writing I do not like it seems to get harder every time.*

Revealed also is a trust in the teacher that it's O.K. to admit frustration or difficulty. You don't always have to say what you think the teacher wants to hear; you can be honest.

The above material gives some sense of what was happening in this classroom over an extended period of time, what texts were being used, what was being asked of the students, what language features were being made explicit, what was being learned as 'English' (literacy) in this context, how the students were learning to talk about texts, how they were learning what was expected of them and what counts as 'literacy' in this classroom.

The activities from the teacher's planning notes, as well as being categorised in the above way, were also mapped according to the Freebody & Luke (1990) four reader/writer roles (App. IV).

The roles of text participant and text user were most commonly required of students. They were encouraged to read for meaning, infer meaning, recognise generic structures (text participant) and how to talk about texts through classroom discussion, how to construct texts jointly (on OHTs) and how to construct texts individually (text user). The code breaker role was also required - word recognition, spelling, paragraphing. There was generally an absence of the role of the text analyst. Using a very crude numerical analysis the following figures reveal that of approximately 107

activities, 53 were text user roles, 40 were text participant roles, 13 were code breaker roles and 1 was the text analyst role.

Of course the roles are not so clearly defined as this. Many activities involve a number of roles simultaneously, at varying levels of complexity. However, the data does suggest that one of the roles - that of text analyst, was not being activated in this classroom. Certainly, other roles were activated and students were engaging with texts at various levels (performative, functional, informational and re-creational in Well's 1991 terms) and in an atmosphere of trust and support which led to growing confidence in their ability to be successful students.

Further evidence of this growing confidence is revealed in their writing. Samples of student writing were collected over the eighteen week period, particularly from the three students who were interviewed. Samples were taken from the beginning, middle and end of the course and the CABE and Navara (1992) criteria were applied to them. The results appear in the following section.

4.5 Student Writing

Samples of writing from students who were interviewed have been taken from the beginning, middle and end of the course. Opinion writing was the genre chosen to track because it was the genre of two assessment tasks, including the final one. It was also the genre which had the most time devoted to it in class - approximately seven sessions, compared to three sessions on descriptive writing, two on discussion/exposition/essay writing, two on a book review, one on a film review and single lessons on various creative writing tasks.

These writing samples were examined according to the CABE Writing Checklist:

1. Are the ideas clearly expressed?

2. Are the ideas related directly to the task/question?

3. Is there reasonable sentence construction?

4. Is the writing organised in paragraphs?

5. Do spelling or grammar errors hinder meaning?

and Navara's (1992) writing assessment criteria:

1. Communicative effect on the reader -the extent to which the intended audience would get the message

2. Text structure - the ability to use appropriate layout, the ability to appropriately organise ideas, the ability to produce a cohesive text

3. Language features - appropriate control of grammatical structures and vocabulary

4. Surface features - appropriate use of upper/lower case letters and punctuation, spelling, accurate for the task and does not hinder meaning

Students were asked, at various times over a three month period, to write their opinions about the following topics:

Is the family a strong unit?

Superstitions

Suicide - should people who attempt it go to prison?

Casinos - should we have them in NSW?

Hunches

Should abortions be legal?

Sportsmanship

Should girls be allowed to get married under the age of 18?

Are smokers discriminated against? [Assessment task]

Some people say that advertising brings colour, interest and humour to our daily lives. What do you think?

What do you think about sponsoring children from overseas? [Assessment task]

The initial opinion writing took place in the first lesson - 15 February, using a newspaper article and picture of a family eating in front of television as a stimulus to respond to: "Is the family still a strong unit?" There appeared little direct instruction about the features of opinion writing at this stage. The

goal was to get students writing (about half a page).

Lyn's writing consists of three paragraphs. The message and ideas are clear and related to the task. There is reasonable sentence construction, although the middle paragraph could have been broken into more than one sentence. (I have taken 'reasonable' sentence construction to mean that it follows the common traditional English grammar format of subject, verb, object.) There are some spelling errors, but they do not hinder overall meaning, eg *'though'* which has been changed by the teacher (Moira) to *'through'* and *'to'* which has been changed to *'too'*. There is one grammatical error in the second paragraph where *'is'* has been used instead of *'are'*, which the teacher has corrected.

Moira's comments in response to this writing are:

> *Your writing is much more relaxed. A good start.*

It is not clear exactly what "more relaxed" refers to.

Lyn thinks that the session was

> *good different from the start of last year.*

15-2-93

Is the family still a strong unit

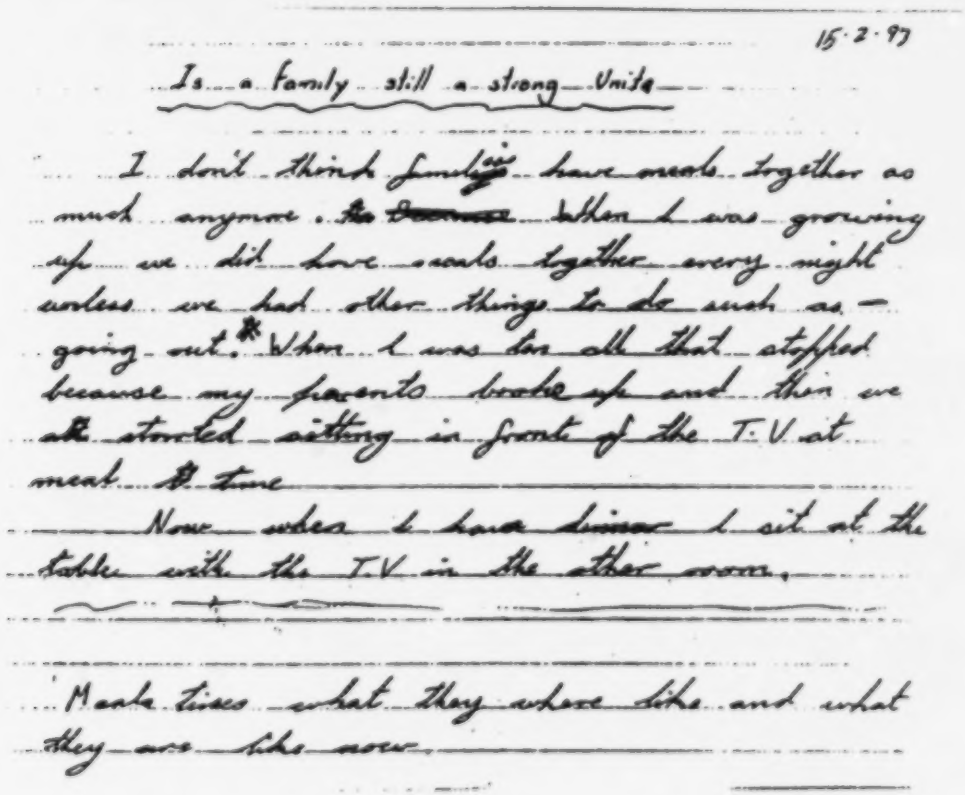
Most families dont have time to sit down and eat together because they have different things to do though the week like sport and other jobs or courses.

If ~~there~~ two parents working the mother is too busy to sit and eat with her family because she has to do the house work in the night and cant get tea when everyone is in bed by the time she has had tea it is time for her to go to bed.

Most families dont have time to sit down and eat together.

John's writing is organised into two paragraphs. It is unclear whether the third 'paragraph' is part of the text or not. Perhaps it is a concluding paragraph or it may be separate, a final thought or summing up. The two-line gap and the lightly drawn line suggest that it may be separate. The message is clear and the ideas are related to the task, although drawing on personal, familiar experiences rather than families in general. Sentence construction is reasonable and spelling and grammar do not hinder meaning. Moira has signalled where a new paragraph should start with # and has corrected two spelling errors, changing *perents* to *parents* and adding *e* to *broke*. Her comments are favourable:

> *This is a good piece of writing - it's clear and easy to read. We'll work on developing these skills further.*



15.2.97

Is a family still a strong Unit

I don't think families have meals together as much anymore. ~~The Dramas~~ When I was growing up we did have meals together every night unless we had other things to do such as — going out. # When I was too all that stopped because my parents broke up and then we all started sitting in front of the T.V at meal # time

Now when I have dinner I sit at the table with the T.V in the other room.

Make lists what they where like and what they are like now.

Vera's writing on the other hand is not directly related to the task. She has ignored the topic of families and gone straight into violence on television. Her writing is organised into two short paragraphs and the message is clear.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

There is reasonable sentence construction, two grammatical errors *'There is'* instead of *'There are'*, which Moira has corrected. Moira has also changed the noun *'pornography'* to the adjective *'pornographic'*, which is more a syntactical error than a spelling error. It is unclear whether the other correction shown is a spelling error or the result of unclear handwriting. Moira ignores the fact that Vera has gone off on a tangent, preferring to foster confidence at this stage.

> *You've got some good ideas and have expressed them well. Maybe we need to work on developing those ideas. Well done.*

15th Feb.

In Today's society there is too much violence on Television. ~~Shoots~~ Shown ~~or~~ Violent Movies should be late at night.
There are alot of ~~Parnagraphy~~ Pornographic movies around. In my opinion these sort of movies should be banned.

At this early stage of the course, the emphasis is on developing the student's confidence in the writing process. There is little comment on content or specific language features.

The students were asked, on the 22 March, to give their opinion in three minutes of free writing on opinion writing. Here are the results:

22-3-93

I am having trouble with the beginning and the end in my opinion writing sometimes I can't work out why you have to say the same. With the middle part it is ok because you can say what you feel and don't have to worry about.

It is unclear from the written data how these comments were responded to, or how they were incorporated into further instruction.

22·3·93

I (know) THINK I NEED LOTS OF HELP.
I do understant it but I dont at the same time if you know what I mean if not ill explane it sometime ~~sss~~ when I got a spear an hour ~~or~~ so.

OPINION WRITING 22-3-93.
I feel that I am getting better with opinion writing. ~~opinion writing~~ is slowly coming to me and ar knowing what to put down on page. It just comes with practice.

The second sample of student opinion writing was written two months after more explicit instruction and modelling of the genre. The idea of first and second drafts had also been presented to the students as well as models of descriptive writing, discussion writing (arguments for and against) and essay writing. They had been producing at least one (usually more) piece of writing each week. One would expect that their writing would have improved as a result of the direct instruction, the modelling and the practice. The discussion writing genre appears to have been used as the model for opinion writing.

Applying the same criteria as before, the following comments can be made. In Lyn's first draft, the ideas are reasonably clearly expressed and generally directed to the question, although there is little evidence given to support her opinion. The connection between health problems from smoking and killing people in a car as the result of alcohol is a tenuous one. Moira makes no comment about the content of the writing.

Lyn has organised her writing into three main sections - introduction, body and conclusion. The body section is large and could have been broken up into smaller paragraphs. This was suggested by Moira in the second draft, but not the first.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

At the sentence level, Lyn still has trouble knowing where to end one sentence and begin another. The argument remains at the second person level (you), rather than the more abstract third person level (they). Moira attempts to model this in her comments on the first draft, but gives no explicit grammatical explanation for the changes.

> *You are not supposed to discriminate against people*
>
> *e.g. People should not be discriminated against*
>
> *... but if you smoke you are looked upon .....*
>
> *e.g. smokers are looked upon ....*
>
> *..... like they are dirty ....*

Moira's concluding comment is in the affective domain:

> *great!*

Certain spelling errors have been indicated by sp. in the text and the correct word written at the bottom of the page. These have been changed by Lyn in her second draft.

Are Smokers discrimiated

It is my opinion that smokers are discrimiated against soon you will not be able to ~~smoke~~ any where.

Every where you go you see no smoking sp signs in shops, offices, on trains, hospitals every where you are not suppost sp to be discriminate againe people because of colour race or what they ~~are~~ went to do you are free to do what you went but if you smoke you are looked upon ~~as~~ some sort of leper ~~with~~ ~~foot~~ you are dirty. I also think that other people can not get health proplems from others smoking. you do not go out in your car and bill some

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

one ~~[illegible]~~ ~~can~~ after ~~[illegible]~~
having a couple of smokes like
a ~~don~~ drinker does. But yet
there is ~~no~~ not as much non
drinking signs around as smoking.

Yes smokers are discriminated (sp) against
If you went to smoke it is your
right to do so and not have to
feel bad about where and when you
do. ~~[illegible]~~.

In her second draft, Lyn has incorporated the changes suggested by Moira in the first draft. The spelling errors that went uncorrected the first time- *won't* for *want* - are highlighted in the second draft. The interesting thing about this draft is the change of pronouns by Moira. Rather than continuing with the model of more generalised, third person sentence construction which she attempted to show in the first draft, Moira has changed the pronoun *you* to *we*, positioning Lyn and *people* and *smokers* as the same.

OPINION WRITING. 7-4-93

It is my opinion that smokers are discriminated against soon you will not be able to smoke any where.

Every where you go you see no smoking signs in shops, offices, on trains, hospitals, every where. People should not be discriminated against because of colour, race, or what they wont (want) to do. we you are free to do what you (we) went (want) but if you (we) smoke you (we) are looked upon as some sort of a leper like they (we) are dirty* I also think that other people can not get health problems from others smoking.
People do not go out in their cars and kill someone after having a couple of smokes like drinkers do. But yet there is not as much non drinking signs around as smoking.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Yes, smokers are discriminated against if ~~you~~ we want to smoke it is ~~your~~ our right to do so and not have to feel bad about where and when ~~you~~ we do.

The overall result in terms of the CABE course however, is a Pass for Lyn. She comments in her feedback sheet:

Opinion writing I finally finished and that is good hope it was OK.

For her assessment in April, Vera wrote three drafts which appear uncorrected by Moira (this may have occurred orally in class). There are only minor changes between the drafts. It is clear that Vera has used the visual representation of Introduction, Body and Conclusion to organise her writing into paragraphs. The ideas are reasonably clearly expressed although again, not directly related to the topic. Sentence construction is adequate and spelling and grammar do not hinder meaning. However, the content (familiar) and the development of an argument remain weak although these are not aspects that have been commented on by Moira.

OPINION WRITING [1st DRAFT]

[Introduction]

In my opinion no-one should not be allowed to smoke in Restaurants by law.

[BODY]

When yo go to a Restaurant you like to sit down and enjoy what you are eating. For example if someone suffers from asthma. A non-smoker has more chance of breathing smoke fumes into their lungs. I believe there should be special smoking areas for people who smoke.

[CONCLUSION]

For these reasons srnokins should not be allowed in Restaurants by law.

2nd Draft

Introduction

In my opinion smoking should not be allowed in Restaurants by Law.

BODY

For example a few months ago I went to the club with my husband for a meal. We could not enjoy our meal at all. When you go out for an ~~meal~~ enjoyable meal you like to know what you are eating and paying for.

CONCLUSION

Another point is that there should be special areas for smokers.

CONCLUSION

For these reasons I believe smoking should not be allowed in Restaurants by Law

OPINION WRITING

In my opinion smoking should not be allowed in Restaurants by Law.

For example a few months ago my husband and I went to the local club for a meal. We both could not enjoy our meal at all. When you go out for an enjoyable meal you like to know who you are eating along with what you are paying for.

I believe there should be special areas for smokers and non smokers.

For these reasons I don't think smoking should ~~not~~ be allowed in Restaurants by Law.

In their final assessment on 9 June, students were asked to write a first draft and then a final copy on the given sheet in response to the question "What do you think about sponsoring children from overseas?"

Lyn's ideas are clearly expressed and related to the question, but remain at the personal level. Sentence construction is good and has improved since the previous writing sample. There are one or two spelling errors, but they do not hinder meaning. The writing is organised into paragraphs. She has used the linking conjunction *There for* [sic] in her final paragraph which she has not used before. In these ways it can be said that her writing has improved over the eighteen weeks. However, it still remains at the familiar, personal experience level and there appears little development of ideas.

The writing in Lyn's "How I Felt About Today" sheets reveals spelling errors and an absence of punctuation which reflect the different audiences for the writing and the different purposes. Spelling and punctuation have not become 'automatic' or 'natural'.

It is a good idea to sponsor children in other countrys if they get the money.

I have often thought of sponsoring a child but am unsure if they really get the money. I Know you are told that you will get photos and things to show how well the child is doing but can you be really sure?
I would much mirer have the child living in my care.

There for I would know the child is getting the money and help they need.

59

In John's final opinion writing the ideas are clearly expressed, relate to the question and are organised in paragraphs. Spelling errors do not hinder meaning. Linking devices (also, that) are used to give cohesion. Use of the third person make the text less personal and closer to written than spoken text. This is an improvement on his earlier writing.

John had written in his feedback sheets on the 15 March that he was 'getting the hang of opinion writing' and this sample of writing bears that out.

I think its worth while sponsoring a child from overseas.

Not like our country if children are suffering they can always get some sort of help from the Government or the Salvation Army. They provide food and clothes and many more things, children from overseas have no help from their Government all they can do is hope that someone one day will sponsor them so they can live. Also children out here can get free medical service when the children overseas have no help at all.

That is why I think it is a good idea to sponsor a child.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Vera's final writing sample reveals similar problems to previous writing samples - her ability to relate her ideas directly to the question and to develop a coherent argument. There is definite improvement in that she has given a number of examples of how sponsorship money is spent (in the third paragraph). However she particularises the familiar (World Vision) and fails to link it back to sponsorship in general. Her writing is organised in paragraphs and sentence construction is good. Spelling does not hinder meaning. She has used *finally* as a concluding device which has not appeared in her writing before.

In my opinion, I think it is a good idea for people to sponsor a child from overseas.

For instance look at the Forty-four Famine. Money raised from the Famine help millions of starving children in World Wide countries.

I believe it gives these children a good chance in life. The money sent overseas goes to giving them a good education, medical care, also nurishing food for these underprivileged children.

Finally, these are the reasons I support the World Vision Sponsorship.

61

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Vera's comments in her feedback sheets have always been positive:

3 March	*Learn't a lot about opinion writing. I am getting better.*
8 March	*I learn't a lot about opinion writing & learning the arguments for and against.*
10 March	*Felt I was getting better*
15 March	*Opinion writing. Learning a lot about agreeing and disagreeing with various topics*
17 March	*Opinion writing. It is getting better with practice*
29 March	*Feel that I am improving with practice*
5 April	*Getting better with opinion writing. I thought the work was not hard*
9 June	*Today we did English exam. I think I did alright.*

Such comments are consistent with what she said in her interview.

The above writing samples and the teacher's comments about the writing reveal engagement at the performative (encoding/decoding) level (Wells 1991). Generally the spelling and punctuation were responded to, not the ideas. It seems that content is not as important as form, or the fact that students have written something. There is often a reluctance on the part of ABE teachers, in keeping with their belief in nurturing the fragile self esteem of students, to challenge students' ideas. The above comments are in no way meant to underestimate the power and necessity of developing student's self esteem and confidence and to give positive reinforcement, but it leaves the question open as to what other ways are there of responding to student writing? More broadly, what needs to be done to develop a pedagogy in line with what McCormack (Bradshaw 1992) argues for - a pedagogy that does not just focus on linguistic competence, but also develops ethical, intellectual, political and social understandings. This point will be re-visited in the final section of the report.

5. DISCUSSION

Having gathered all this data - the teacher's planning notes, handouts, student writing, the interviews, observed the classroom in action and interpreted the data in the light of certain theories or frameworks, what can be said about how adults develop literacy? It is now time to return to the original questions which framed the project.

What literacy/ices are being constructed by teachers in classrooms?

In this context, the literacy that is being constructed by this particular teacher is a performative, functional one that is concerned with the personal growth of individual students, with a strong emphasis on building self esteem and developing confidence in learners. It is not a critical literacy which seeks to challenge the status quo, or to analyse power relationships within society. In this way it is in line with the literacy that is constructed by the CABE curriculum.

What texts (spoken and written) are being worked on?

A variety of texts are being worked on in this classroom, largely in keeping with suggestions outlined in the curriculum document. These have been outlined in Section 4.4 but can be summarised briefly as writing opinions, descriptions, book reviews; reading newspaper articles and books, doing crosswords and puzzles and giving a talk.

How do people in classrooms learn to be literacy students?

These people are learning to be literacy students in this classroom by engaging with the above texts, by answering the teacher's questions, listening to the teacher and others in the group, working individually, working in pairs, working in small groups and the larger group, doing homework. They are learning that literacy is about skills development, about paragraphs, opinions, understanding texts, discussion, giving talks and passing exams. They are also learning that with this skills development comes an increase in confidence which enables them to engage in literacy practices outside the classroom.

How does the curriculum operate to position people as literacy learners?

The way the curriculum positions people as literacy learners has been discussed in the Introduction and also in Section 4.2. It can be said that the CABE curriculum locates literacy learners in the humanist progressive discourse, with an emphasis on personal growth and individual skills development. Recognition is given to the learner as adult with an accompanying requirement to share decision making. The curriculum implies that after mastery of the list of skills (Section 4.2) and achievement of the stated objectives (Section 4.2) a person is literate and can now go on to further education or get a job.

What literacies are practised outside the classroom? Is there transfer of learning occurring?

There is some evidence in the interview data of literacy practices outside the classroom, such as letter writing, form filling, newspaper reading, book reading. This would seem to come from an increase in confidence rather than direct skill transfer.

How useful is the Freebody & Luke (1990) model of reader roles in analysing what occurs in classrooms?

This model was a useful one in analysing what occurred in this classroom, along with Well's (1991) five levels of engagement with text. However, it must be stressed that the teacher was not aware of this model so had not made it part of her repertoire and the CABE curriculum was written before this model was developed so was not informed by it. It does however highlight the absence of the text analyst role in this classroom and in the curriculum. This has been changed in the new Certificate in Adult Foundation Education (CAFE) curriculum which replaced the CABE one. In the CAFE curriculum, which has been informed by the *National Framework of Adult English Language, Literacy and Numeracy Curriculum* (ACTRAC 1993), the role of text analyst is present and well developed. Whether or not it has been translated into practice remains to be seen.

How do teachers see what they are doing?

This particular teacher sees herself as being a facilitator, a guide to making students more independent. She believes in nurturing their self esteem and

developing their confidence at the same time as introducing them to a range of genres and processes. She sees literacy as about survival, as more than reading and writing.

How do students see what they are doing?

The students see themselves as being successful learners, as participating in education, often for the first time, successfully. They see themselves on pathways to somewhere else - to further courses, or jobs. They emphasise the increased confidence that they have found from this CABE experience. They feel valued and comfortable in a classroom environment which is based on trust and support. They also see themselves as trying hard, that some things are hard and they'll have to keep at them. The overwhelming feeling from the interviews with students was of a positive learning experience, which contrasted strongly to their school experiences.

The teacher and students are products of their history and their views and beliefs reflect that. They reflect the 70's - 80's discourse of individual progress through society via progress through education. There is little discussion of other factors which may impede this progress, such as gender, race or class.

Bradshaw (1992) claims that teachers need to go beyond this discourse, where literacy is often seen as neutral skills development or as effective literacy which trains people to be useful members of society. These are essentially conservative positions and need to be challenged. She cites McCormack (p. 6) who argues for

> a pedagogy where initiation into meaning is equated with the development of ethical, intellectual, political and social understandings as well as linguistic ones.

She also argues (p. 8) for a critical social literacy which

> is founded on the premise that being literate automatically incorporates critiquing in the name of truth and justice. .... it sees literacy as a collective enterprise in which the teacher, with specialist knowledge of the intricate interplay between language and social life, is morally and intellectually bound to challenge students "givens", to ensure that students not only leave wiser than when they arrived but with an extensive and reliable repertoire of linguistic, and hence personal, social and political resources as well. The task of the teacher necessitates re-defining and surpassing any limited, impoverished notions of literacy that have shaped and defined students' expectations.

This is the challenge for teachers in the 90's and beyond. It can be said that the classroom under study in this project left students wiser than when they arrived and with a richer repertoire of resources. However, few of their "givens" about literacy were challenged.

6. EPILOGUE

A Message to the Reader

This is in the way of a preamble to the report which is to follow. In a sense it is the 'wrong' way of introducing a research report in that it is personal and hence subjective. However I think that research is never wholly neutral or objective or unproblematic and I think that it is important to acknowledge this.

The idea of being a 'researcher' was always a scary one to me; a researcher is someone who knows what they're doing, can look at a whole heap of data, make some sense of it and then come up with some brilliant analysis and sound recommendations. It didn't sound like me. However, I was given an opportunity to 'do' some research and thought that I should rise to the occasion - it would be good for me, 'would look good on my CV' and I might even learn something! So I started ..... by reading what other people had done (and wondering how I was ever going to do something similar) and doing a couple of subjects on Research Methodology.

These subjects gave me some idea about what was involved, what the underlying practices were and guidelines for me to follow. However, the reality did not quite match. The clear steps that had been outlined in methodology texts became blurred in unsatisfactory phone calls, people being ill, prospective 'objects of study' dropping out at the last minute. The result being that the time frame became even more unrealistic.

The other issue was that of having to ask people to be involved (the role of supplicant/beggar); this immediately put me on the defensive so that I didn't feel I could be too fussy/directive about what I was looking for (didn't want to put them on the spot). So it was left fuzzy at times when it should have been tight (according to the methodology). Basically arranging the fieldwork was a messy process, rather than a systematic one. Of course I tried to be systematic, but reality often seemed to get in the way.

The actual observations were also problematic. I had to acknowledge my own personal impact as a researcher. I was known in the field as someone working in teacher education so naturally, the 'observed' felt threatened. I worked hard to counter this, as I certainly didn't want people to feel criticised. But I'm not sure how successful I was. It's very hard, as you all know who have been observed, to have someone watching you and possibly

thinking the worst, or not really understanding that with this particular student only a certain approach works - and it's not the text book one. But the observations also gave the teacher an opportunity to discuss what she was doing, to discuss particular students with a 'colleague', an all too rare moment in busy teaching lives.

The interviews with students were also interesting. Why should these people answer my questions? What was in it for them? They were selected by their teacher and asked if they'd mind and none of them did. But we often ask students to do things and they acquiesce - perhaps because they don't know how to say no to a teacher? They all spoke openly but unfortunately one day's worth of data was severely minimised because the tape didn't work properly! (This is apparently not uncommon in the lives of researchers ..... it makes me wonder about a lot of data that I see in reports!)

After the field work had been done, the task of sifting and analysing the data supposedly began. Unfortunately another project I was working on took priority and the research lay dormant for a number of months ..... Picking up the threads again is a difficult job. In the space of a year, the field has undergone quite radical changes. The articles, reports and books that I was reading a year ago have now been superseded by another wave, so the background section of the report needs to incorporate these changes. The data now seems remote and needs to have life breathed into it again.

Another problem has been the time required to think and then write. Snatches of time are insufficient. You need a block of uninterrupted time in order to get your head around the data in the hope of making something meaningful arise. Many ideas are spawned but then die for want of follow up. There are also periodic bursts of panic, when you are absolutely convinced that the project can never reach fruition. Hopefully these times don't last too long or immobilise you too extremely. But the process is a flawed one, and a messy one. The big question is who's going to read it? Who's going to benefit from it? Is there anything to learn from it? I hope the answers to these questions will be positive, but I can't be sure!

I now find myself thinking of many things from a researcher's point of view. I find myself saying 'Wouldn't it be fascinating to do a study to find out .....' But I'd like someone else to do the work!

Since writing this preamble, I have been shown an article (Reid et al 1996) which reinforces my experience of 'doing' research. The article examines problems of representing "reality" or "truth".

> The researcher's positioning within the major discourses governing

> educational practice may have as much influence on what is seen in the classroom as does the researcher's physical positioning within material *reality. (p. 87)*

The authors challenge researchers to make explicit their underlying interests and agendas. I hope I have done so in this research report.

Jenny McGuirk

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Australian Committee for Training Curriculum (ACTRAC) 1993 *The National Framework of Adult English Language, Literacy and Numeracy Curriculum*, ACTRAC Products, Frankston, Victoria.

Black, S. & Sim, S. 1990 *The Learning Experience: Perspectives of Former Students from Two Adult Literacy Programs* Adult Literacy Information Office, Sydney.

Bradshaw, D. 1992 'From Fill-ins to Foundations: Changing views of literacy' in *Writing our Practice*, Adult, Community and Further Education Board, Victoria.

Brennan, B. Clark, R. & Dymock, D. 1989 *Outcomes of Adult Literacy Programs*, University of New England, Armidale.

Christie, F. 1993 'Curriculum Genres: Planning for effective teaching' in Cope, B. & Kalantzis, M. *The Literacies of Power and the Powers of Literacy: A Genre Approach to Teaching Writing*, The Falmer Press, London, pp. 199-232.

Comber, B. 1992 'Critical Literacy: A selective review and discussion of recent literature' *South Australian Educational Leader*, vol. 3, no. 1, February, pp. 1-10.

Cope, B. & Kalantzis, M. 1993 *The Literacies of Power and the Power of Literacy: A Genre Approach to Teaching Writing*, The Falmer Press, London.

Darkenwald, G. 1986 Effective Approaches to Teaching Basic Skills to Adults. A Research Synthesis, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, Washington DC.

Davison, C. Taylor, E. & Hatcher, L. 1993 *Pedagogy & Politics: Developing ethnic-inclusive practices in the ALBE profession*, Department of Employment, Education and Training, Canberra.

Deakin University 1987 *Curriculum Evaluation and Case Study*, Vol.2, Geelong, Victoria.

Department of Employment, Education and Training 1991 *Australia's Language: the Australian and Literacy Policy*, Australian Government Publishing Serives, Canberra.

Freebody, P. & Luke, A. 1990 'Literacies' programs: Debate and demands in cultural context', in *Prospect*, Vol. 5, no. 3, pp. 7-16.

Giumelli, J. 1990, *Just One More Problem: Perceptions of literacy by community service providers and their clients in two areas of metropolitan Sydney*, Department of Employment, Education and Training.

Good Practice in Australian Adult Literacy and Basic Education, June 1991, No. 13: Research and keeping up to date.

Grant, A. 1991 *Adults using literacy in groups. Report on a national level research project*, National Policy on Languages, Adult Literacy Action Campaign, La Trobe University, Victoria.

Hammersley, M. & Atkinson 1983 *Ethnography: Principles in practice*, Tavistock, London.

Hammond, J. Wickert, R. Burns, A. Joyce, H. & Miller, A. 1992a *The Pedagogical Relations between Adult ESL and Adult Literacy*, Department of Employment, Education and Training, Canberra.

Hammond, J. Burns, A. Joyce, H. Brosnan, D. & Gerot, L. 1992b *English for Social Purposes*, National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research.

Holland, S. NSW TAFE Commission 1992 *An emerging national curriculum. English literacy for adults project report*, Sydney.

Hood, S. & Kightley, S. 1991 *Literacy Development: A longitudinal study*, NSW Adult Migrant English Service.

Horseman, J. 1988 *Exploring Community-Based Literacy Research*, Validation Draft, Spiral Community Resource Group, Community & Workplace Unit, Ministry of Education, Ontario.

Jennings, L. 1986 'Issues for Consideration by Case Study Workers' in *Qualitative Research* ed. M. Emery, Research Network, Australian Association of Adult Education Inc., Papers from a symposium, May 22-23 1986, pp. 11-17.

Lather, P. 1986 Research as Praxis, *Harvard Educational Review*, Vol. 56, no. 3, pp. 257-277.

Lee, A. & Wickert, R. 1995 'Deconstructing Adult Literacy Teaching' *Open Letter*, vol. 5, no. 1, pp. 55-68.

Luke, A. 1992a 'When Basic Skills and Information Processing Just Aren't Enough: Rethinking reading in new times', Australian Council for Adult Literacy Conference Papers, 9-11 October, Sydney, vol. 1, pp. 1-24.

Luke, A. 1992b 'Literacy and Work in 'New Times', *Open Letter*, vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 3-15.

Meriam, S. & Simpson, E. 1989 *A guide to research for educators and teachers of adults*, Robert E. Krieger, Publ. Co. Inc, Florida.

Navara, D. 1992 *Literacy Assessment Tasks for Placement and Referral*, Abridged Project Report, NSW Adult Migrant English Service, Sydney.

NSW TAFE 1988 *Certificate in Adult Basic Education*, Sydney.

Nunan, D. 1992 *Research Methods in Language Learning*, Cambridge University Press, New York.

Quantz, R.A. & O'Connor, T.W. 1988 'Writing critical ethnography: Dialogue, multi-voicedness and carnival in cultural texts', *Educational Theory*, 38, 1, pp. 95-109.

Reid, J. Kamler, B. Simpson, A. & Maclean, R. 1996 '"Do you see what I see?" Reading a different classroom scene', *Qualitative Studies in Education*, vol. 9, no. 1, pp. 87-108.

Stenhouse, L. 1981 'Case Study and Case Records: Towards a contemporary history of education' in Deakin University (1987) *Curriculum Evaluation and Case Study*, Vol. 2, Geelong, Victoria.

Wells, G. 1991 'Talk About Text: Where literacy is learned and taught' in Booth, D. & Thornley-Hall, C. *The Talk Curriculum*, Australian Reading Association, Victoria, pp. 45-88.

White, K. 1983 'Conflict, Principles and Practice in Adult Literacy', in *Australian Journal of Reading*, Vol. 6 no. 3, pp. 117-127.

Wickert, R. 1989 *No Single Measure*, Department of Employment, Education and Training, Canberra.

Wickert, R. 1992 'The Power of Literacy: Myths and fallacies' in Penman, R. & Sless, D. (eds) *Designing Information for People*, Proceedings from the symposium, Canberra Research Press, Canberra.

Woods. C. 1992 'English - a pedagogical porcupine?', *English in Australia*, no. 100, pp. 77-96.

APPENDIX 1

Chronological Summary of Data

1 March

OHTs/HOs

- OHT - Paragraphs -

  1. Moderation & a sense of order should be the main considerations in paragraphing.

  2. The reason for treating each topic in a paragraph by itself is to help the reader

  - show that a new step in the development of the topic has been reached
  - break up a large block of writing (a visual help)

- HO - 'Julia's strange experience' - 7 paragraph text used to ask "what does each paragraph talk about?"
- OHT newspaper article - 'Unity via supper' - modelling of "different illustrations on the same theme"
- HO - Description of a man to "put into paragraphs"
- OHT - scaffolding of an 8 paragraph story arranged into three columns Setting, Instruction & Example
- 5 sets of cut up gardening & cookery tips/recipes
- HO - Crossword (spelling to correct)
- HO - Wonderword

Tasks/Activities

- Write a story using the scaffolding
- Match cut up gardening hints or recipes to "Garden Clinic" or "Cookery" and questions with answers (pair work)

Teacher's Comments on Student Writing

- Very clear paragraphing. Moira [Lyn]
- [Peter] You have changed tense halfway through the story

  # = when a new paragraph begins - leave a space.

  Peter: Your description of the people and the situation is very good.
- great story! You've got the idea of paragraphing [Ann]

Student Feedback: "How I Felt About Today"

- Lyn: *I think I will find this a bit hard.*
- John: *We did making up our own story from another one. I feel I am improving in writing but not my spelling.*
- Vera: *I felt I was learning about short stories & where to put punctuation.*

29 March

Teacher's Planning Notes

- 1st drafts opinion writing

Tasks/Activities

- Write your opinion about sportsmanship (1st draft)

Teacher's Comments on Student Writing

- Conclusion? 1. people 2. allowed [Lyn]
- 1. fights 2. high 3. tackles good effort I, I can see you've thought of the Introduction and the conclusion. Thanks Moira
- 1. learnt This is a very good effort Con. I can see that you've thought through the Intro –> middle –> ending maybe another suggested

ending might be [I believe that] when they eliminate their mistakes, they will then begood at their sport.

- to = going to the shop

  too = there are too many people here

  good effort Mary. but don't forget the other things that you've learnt

  [# paragraphs] *Thanks Moira*

- Peter, I can see that you have thought about the beginning - middle - and the conclusion good effort. Thanks Moira
- 1. where2. inspiration 3. disgusting A, good beginning + ending - the middle is okay but a little repetitious. Thanks. Moira
- Ann,Very good effort. Don't forget that when you start on another aspect of the topic begin a new paragraph. Good. Thanks. Moira

Student Feedback: "How I Felt About Today"

- Lyn: *This is very difficult but I do feel I am getting better.*
- John: *I found it is helping me with my writing.*
- Vera: *Feel that I am improving with practice.*

21 April

Teacher's Planning Notes

- Film Review
- Video - Clockwise - John Cleese (92 mins)
- Watch video
- Individually write own first thoughts on video.
- Class -brainstorm words to describe:
  - The situations
  - The characters
  - Your feelings
  - Recommended?

- TASK - write own review following format
  - think of paragraphing
  - Use Thesaurus.
- FORMAT
  1. The Plot
  2. The People
  3. Your feelings
  4. Recommended?
- Read & share with rest of group.
- Film words to describe
  - where it takes place
  - The characters
  - The story
  - Your feelings
  - Recommended?
  - The situations
  - The people
  - Your feelings
  - paragraphing
  - Thesaurus for more words

Student Feedback: "How I Felt About Today"

- Lyn: *Watched a movie it was very funny and then we did some writing on the revew it a bit hard trying to do the writing.*
- John: *I found it easy and fun I never thourt I would rite so much.*
- Vera: Film Review *saw a film and thought it very good.*

APPENDIX II

Observation 1

15 March 1993 - Observation (Week 5)

The group arrives at various times and when settled, Moira begins with

a warm-up exercise, looking at things in logical order.

She organises who works with whom depending on where they are sitting. The activity is a sequencing activity, an article on picnics (App. V). Students work in pairs, Moira wanders, checking and helping if necessary. Her instructions include:

look for the Introduction ..... we spoke about joiners, joining words

Students mumble to each other with varying degrees of engagedness; one mumbles:

too complicated for me ..... this is too hard.

Discussion continues within the pairs about the best way to do it. After about twenty minutes Moira brings the class together to look at the solution which she shows on an overhead transparency (OHT)

Let's look at what made it easier in some spots and what made it more difficult ..... logical order? ..... introduce the subject ..... what have we talked about?..... What gives it the logic?

One student answers:

Paragraphs!

Moira confirms and asks for other things. She writes on the board:

beginning	introduced
middle	logical order
end	paragraphed
	for & against
	joining words

and asks:

> *How have they presented what they want to say? Can you see any point and then further and further discussion on that point? .....*

The students appear to be having trouble following, or responding in the desired way. Moira moves on to something else, without spending too much time on it.

The next stage of the lesson involves four pages of newspaper clippings on whether or not there should be casinos in NSW with:

> *arguments for and arguments against.*

Moira asks a particular student for her opinion and as a whole group, opinions are expressed. Moira urges them to develop their opinions into arguments by telling why it would have such and such an effect. There is active discussion for almost ten minutes, as people respond to the opinions expressed in the clippings. Moira then instructs students to:

> *discuss in your group whether you agree or disagree with any of their* [people in the clippings] *points and as a group you can come up with your ideas for and your ideas against. So you'll need a secretary in each group.*

The groups organise themselves and talk informally. Moira walks around and checks on the groups. The students appear engaged in the task; they look at the texts, give their opinions and write down points. After ten minutes, Moira calls them together to:

> *share what we're doing*

and calls for:

> *arguments for* and then *arguments against.*

Students call out their responses which she writes on the board:

FOR	*AGAINST*
1. more money into country	1. organised crime
2. create more jobs	2. family breakups sell homes
3. more night life	3. send people broke family unit
4. fun	4. suicide/prostitution
5. Olympics	5. RSLs etc would go broke
	6. addiction to drugs

Group discussion continues for a few minutes and then Moira calls for a:

quick smoko!

[Moira tells me during the break that the students have a short concentration span so she plans a variety of activities and breaks.]

After ten minutes, they resume with Moira reminding them of previous sessions where a similar task was done:

> *Remember we put things in boxes? ..... What was in the box?*

Someone responds and is confirmed and Moira writes on the board:

1. Intro - subject intro
2. what you're going to talk about
3. arguments for middle or against
4. conclusion re-iterate

Students are instructed to write their arguments for or against, or both, with the information that has been recorded on the board. OHTs are handed out for each group to write on. Moira wanders from group to group clarifying the task and giving directions:

> *That's your introduction, yes, but you've got to decide what you want to talk about. You won't have room or time to talk about everything here. So you can brainstorm before you start .....*

Moira spends time with one group in particular, with an L2 student.

After ten minutes, Moira brings the group together and uses what has been boxed on the board:

> *I think we'd better all come together ..... argue either for or against. Your first box would be 'I agree with casinos in NSW because ..... more money, creates more jobs, more night life and more fun'. No need for detail at that stage. This* (pointing to third box) *is where you go into detail. Now that you've mentioned the points that you're going to talk about, you take point 1, which was more money and we talk about 'It will bring more money to NSW because blah, blah, blah, blah' and go into detail then. Then your second point then and you go into detail. And you bring your fourth point down and you go into detail. Can you see a picture of how that's being created, how you're creating the writing? So when you've done it, before we look at it, check that you've covered all those points.*

The groups continue working and Moira walks around helping when necessary:

That's all right, you've got the right idea though.

The whole group is then asked to contribute what they've got so far. Vera reads her introduction, Moira confirms and moves to the next group. Amy reads her group's and Moira responds:

..... a bit long ..... maybe have a look at it and see if you can make it a bit clearer as your introduction .....

The final group reads theirs and they continue working. Moira adds:

Think of it as if if you're talking to somebody and you're having this discussion, you wouldn't just line up all the points, you'd give reasons for why you think that .... It might help you if you put your arguments into boxes, so that it's clear which part you want in which part .....

After ten minutes, the groups who are finished swap OHTs and read each others. There is lots of discussion and laughter. Moira works with the L2 student. She asks if the groups have any suggestions to offer the other groups. There is some light hearted discussion about plagiarism. Moira checks:

Have you covered all your statements? Did you develop your statement?

After some problem with the overhead projector refusing to work, one group's OHT is shown which Moira reads out.

Moira: *Where's the introduction?*
Amy: *The whole lot's the introduction .....*
Moira: *Yeah, ... is that what you meant? .....*
Moira: *And you're going to talk about [.....] 'Casinos create jobs and casinos create organised crime', so we're going to look for those two points..... 'Create jobs because tourism' .... Now what have we gone onto here? It's a bit point form-ish ..... but that's OK, I know I interrupted you in the middle of it, so don't worry. 'Create jobs because tourism brings money into the country'. So the point they've got here is that it does create jobs. Have they developed it down here? .....They create jobs because tourism brings money into the country ..... Right. 'Organised crime is another point, ...*
Moira: *It's a bit point form but you've, you've got the idea of bringing the points up here, saying why here. So we just have to make it more into sentences ..... What is this?* (pointing to final paragraph)
Lyn: *The end*
Vera: *The end.....*
Moira: *It links back with the introduction. Well, you've got the idea ....*

Moira then moves on to the next group's OHT and questions are asked about whether they've developed an argument, developed their statements:

> *Right so you've got an obvious conclusion. The hardest part is in the middle, developing your ideas, your points. All right....*

The third group's OHT is shown and Moira reads it with the students involved.

> Moira: *All right, good. Quite clear actually isn't it?*
> John: *Yeah!* (the writer agrees, accompanied by group laughter.)
> Moira: *It's short, and sweet, but then we're not going into length now. When you do one on your own you can make your length more .... It's very clear, you've got the question, there's your statement, there's your position - this is what you think . .... this is what you argued, more money, create more jobs, night life. That's three points ..... and a little bit about them.And then you've got your conclusion.*

There is an interesting discussion at this stage between John and Ann (in different groups) about the copyright sign that John and Con have added to their OHT. Ann thinks it is:

> *children's viewing*

but Con corrects her:

> *No, it's copyright.*
>
> *Oh*

says Ann quietly, realising she's learnt something but slightly embarrassed that she didn't know it. (Ann has been one of the most vocal students throughout the morning, often seeking the attention of other students and Moira in an active, but not disagreeable, way.)

The final OHT is asked for but Ann is not finished writing yet. Moira says not to worry:

> *We'll just look as far as you've got ....*

The first comment to be made when the rest of the students see it, is from Con:

> *Ah, copycat!*

Ann has put the copyright sign on her OHT as well. Moira & Ann read aloud. Ann reads on and stumbles a few times while reading her writing; another member of the group helps her out and she corrects her miscues. Moira asks at the end:

> *Did we know that in the beginning? That you'd make all those points? ..... Right, so maybe that would be in your introduction, just the points that you're going to talk about..... Other than that, that's great. Well done. ...* [to the whole group] *what about tense: You've all used it.....*

There is a few seconds discussion of present tense and 'would' and 'will'.

Moira then signals a break:

> OK you can have a short break, but don't move.

She hands out a crossword. This is a pattern that is obviously familiar to the students who approach the task with interest. They talk while they're working on the crossword and check with each other about spelling and certain words. They use the dictionary if there is some disagreement about spelling. Moira helps but does not give the answers. She encourages them to ask each other and to check their spelling with each other.

As this is the first time I've been in the class, Moira gives me the opportunity now (before the break) to speak to the students about why I'm there. They are reluctant to leave their crosswords. I give them a short explanation of the project and the consent forms. They are given the opportunity to ask questions (none are forthcoming) and then fill in the forms. It is time for a five minute break and most of them leave the room. A few stay behind to finish their crossword.

After the break Moira directs the next stage of activity:

> *What we'll do now, you've worked as a group, we've worked with the whole class, now you can work as an individual and you can either, if you want to still stick to that topic you can and develop your own. Or, if you don't like it you don't have to. Choose something that you feel strongly about. When would you use this style of writing for? What would you do, who would you .... why would you write like this?*
> Mary: *in giving your opinion on the subject?*
> Moira: *Yeah, yeah .....*
> Vera: *Newspapers?*
> Moira: *Newspapers.*
> Ann: *To the editor.*
> Moira: *To the editor. Also if you're going on to further study, that's the essay style. So it's a good way to develop your writing. So if you want to develop as*

an individual your own piece of writing, you can do. If not, can we have suggestions from everybody .....

She asks for suggestions/topics that we could have a real *'fight'* about and writes them on the board as people call them out:

politics
religion
environment
diseases
abortion

There are brief discussions of each topic as they are called out; drawing out the fors and againsts or the issues that may be involved. Moira seeks for more ideas:

What's another ..... what would you like to write about, it doesn't really matter whether you agree or not. The point is after writing it down you can look at how do you discuss, how do you give your opinion and if you follow the same instructions that we've talked about up here and organise your writing so that it's clear, it's easy for the reader and you get your point across. If it's muddled, you won't get your point across. So we've got two issues , there's the abortion (writes *'should there be?'* on the board) *and the environment 'looking after the environment is the council's responsibility'. Now I know that's ..... Discussion topic? Anybody else?..... Any topics? ..... Are you going to write on one of these? 'Capital punishment '* and *'drugs'* are added to the list on the board. *What's the issue?..... 'Drugs are too easy to get hold of? ..... should there be capital punishment? '..... if you're interested in the topic it's easier to write about. It may be easier to keep your ideas organised, so we've each got something there that we can get our teeth into.*

Various points of view are thrown in and argued about between various people ..... a general free for all.
Moira lets them talk for a few minutes and then calls them to order:

Righto. .... Hang on ..... keep your opinions to paper, commit your thoughts. Brainstorm first. You can brainstorm with somebody else. Get all your ideas down on paper I. And then start organising how you're going to write about it. then put it down. So you've got your steps. Right? What are you going to do first?
Mary: *Intro!*
Lyn: *Introduction.*
Moira: *No, no, no ..... you're going to get all your thoughts together first..... on paper, then organise your thoughts, and then think how you're going to write it. ..... All right?*

She moves around and checks with individuals ..... small conversations as students attempt the task.

After you've brainstormed, then I'll come and have a look if you like....

Moira leaves the room and returns with newspaper articles on abortion for those who are doing that topic. Discussion breaks out between students at various times about their topics, particularly abortion. Moira spends time with the L2 student. The room goes quiet as everyone engages with the task. After fifteen minutes, Moira instructs students to:

do that piece for homework and also research an article
(from the library.)

She now changes the activity:

We'll finish up with a word game.

Cool says Ann.

'Trackdown' is handed out and '5-Minute Fiction'. There is minimal explanation as students are familiar with the material. Moira checks that everyone is clear. They are all engaged with the task. When they are finished Moira requests that they write up their folders (comment sheets on what they've done). Corrected work from previous sessions is handed back and due assignments are called for. The class finishes at 12.00 and students pack up and leave individually. Moira speaks to each and farewells them.

The atmosphere throughout has been friendly and relaxed. Moira is obviously well-liked and trusted. At times the activities seemed rushed, that not enough time was given to students to work on tasks, but this was due to Moira's reading of their concentration spans.

APPENDIX III

Observation 2

17 May 1993 - Observation (Week 12)

The second observation was shorter than the first as the students were working in the library for the second half of the session, preparing for a short talk which was to be videoed and shown to the class as one of their assignments.

The session began with a discussion on spelling which recapped on the previous Wednesday's discussion. Students were asked to recall some of the things that had been said .....

Mary: *The word doesn't always look the way it sounds.*
Moira: *Can you think of any every day things ...?*
Mary: *Weetbix!*
Moira: *Yes.....*
Mary: *That's not the way to spell Weetbix, it's confusing kids.*
Moira: *All right .....*(writes *Weetbix* on board) *How do you spell wheat?*
Lyn: *w-h-e-a-t*
Moira writes *wheat* on board.
Moira: *Now if someone doesn't know how to spell that could confuse them.*
Lyn: *That's right.*
Moira: *Any other examples?.....*

Moira then shows an OHT which is a letter from a manufacturer responding to a letter from some school children about the confusing spelling of brand names (This letter provides a clear example of the writer positioning the reader in certain ways, but this was not taken up because the focus was on spelling.) There is discussion of why advertisers change spelling in this way so that people identify with that brand. Moira asks

Where do you think it starts to go wrong?

She then hands out examples of brand names and their spellings. Students discuss the correct spelling and the use of abbreviations (App. VII). Examples like Biz-quip, De-Solv-it, Kleenmaid, Centacare are talked about and Moira writes the correct spelling on the board. They are then given a photocopy of some junk mail and are asked to identify two spelling mistakes in brand names. "Whiskas" and "cheez" are identified and the correct spelling is written on the board.

Moira then tells them about the plan for working on their videos.

There's some good news and bad news. The good news is we've got time to plan our videos (everyone groans). *The bad news is the library's not open til 10.*

The students complain in a light-hearted way; they are obviously reluctant to be videoed. They have talked about it in the previous week and preliminary work on the talk has been done. They are to work in the library to do more research into their chosen topics.
In the meantime, Moira hands out a spelling puzzle page - 'ible or able', 'ph', 'gh', 'ff', 'f'. Students work on the sheets with discussion between themselves and referral to dictionaries when needed. After ten minutes Moira goes through the page with them as a whole group and students call out the answers.

There is a short break, after which students are to go to the library to work on their talks.

APPENDIX IV

Four Reader/Writer Roles

Code breaker	Text Participant	Text User	Text Analyst
	Newspaper article - *Family dinner* - reading - writing own opinion Cloze - *Down and Out* - prediction exercise OHTs - Descriptive writing - describing people - describing human scenes - describing objects Punctuation handout *You've got to be able to reach out and touch them* OHT - Written work checklist 5 minute fiction - *Hell Bay & Justice*	Newspaper article - *Family dinner* - reading - writing own opinion Cloze - *Down and Out* - prediction exercise Describing object - listening & guessing task *Sounds Intriguing* - tape of sounds to write description of Writing task - choice of description - prison or noisy flat Punctuation exercises & *Australian Tiger* Descriptive writing - finish the story - *It was a scary night .....* Descriptive writing - Picture to describe - *Plough Inn* Wonderword	

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

88

Code breaker	Text Participant	Text User	Text Analyst
	OHT - Paragraphs- explanation of role they play in text *Julia's strange experience* - model of paragraphing Text to put into paragraphs OHT - *Setting, Instruction, Example* - modelling of writing paragraphs in a story Matching exercise - *Garden clinic & cookery* *Superstitions* *Feel the power* *Australia's first feng shui column*	*Unity via supper* - model of paragraphing Text to put into paragraphs OHT - *Setting, Instruction, Example* - modelling of writing paragraphs in a story Writing their own story Crossword Wonderword Brainstorm superstitions we have Boardwork- statement *Religion is based on superstition.* Discuss. List of positive/negatives on board 1st draft of own writing Trackdown	

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Code breaker	Text Participant	Text User	Text Analyst
	Group construction of argument - for and against on OHT *Gun laws* - comprehension	OHT - Discussion genre - - *Advertisements* - model of structure Students to pick out verbs, then shown OHT- *simple present tense* Students to pick out general terms then shown OHT- *general, not specific terms* Students to pick out logical conjunctions then shown OHT - *logical conjunctions* *Guns can - and do - kill more* *Women take the lead* Crossword Wonderword Revision of discussion genre Essay genre - OHT - *Canterbury Council* - language features - simple present tense, general terms, logical joiners *No jail for death of wife in suicide pact* *Doctors must heed suicide warning* *The right to die with dignity* Discussion - *Suicide is illegal. Should people who attempt it go to prison: If not what should happen to them?* OHT - Boxes - model of structure Group writing - OHT Crossword	

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

90

Code breaker	Text Participant	Text User	Text Analyst
	Sequencing - *Picnics* - noting conjunctions & paragraphs	*A casino for NSW - is it worth the gamble?* Class discussion; brainstorm ideas on board - for & against. Group opinion writing on OHT Own opinion writing Research consent forms Crossword Trackdown Five minute fiction Assessment task - Descriptive writing Thoughts - 3 mins. Thoughts - 3 mins - opinion writing 1st drafts - opinion writing - sportsmanship	
	Comprehension - *If women ruled the world* Vocabulary cards	Crossword Opinion writing - *girls under 18 getting married; sportsmanship; smoking* Assessment task - opinion writing	

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Code breaker	Text Participant	Text User	Text Analyst
	Book review - handout *Pink Pages - movie of the week* Short story to read & review	Book review - handout *Pink Pages - movie of the week* Short story to read & review	
	Film review - video - *Clockwise* - John Cleese	Write first thoughts about video; brainstorm words to describe: the situations, characters, feelings, recommended? Write own review - think of paragraphing; use Thesaurus	
	Giving a prepared talk - Alan Pease video- *body language* Handout exercise - *talk about a matchbox for 3-5 minutes* Handout - *Choosing a topic* Handout - *Writer's block*	Wind up book reviews	
		Literacy Diary - to cover 24 hours (Research & Study Skills activity)	
	Handout - writing task - *Write your opinion - advertising*	Handout - writing task - *Write your opinion - advertising*	
Puzzle page - *ible or able; ph or gh or ff or f*	Spelling - OHT - *letter to students re spelling of brand names* Handout - grocery items - look for misspellings	Discussion of brand names and common spelling trends - ie 'k' replacing 'c' sound; 'x' replacing 'cks' sound	

92

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Code breaker	Text Participant	Text User	Text Analyst
	Listening task - comprehension - *euthanasia* *No jail for death of wife in suicide pact* - comprehension Vocabulary cards The right to die with dignity - cloze & vocabulary exercises	Handout - grocery items - look for misspellings Own preparation for talk Assessment task - book review The right to die with dignity - cloze & vocabulary exercises Picture of Ethel & Alice. Write a dialogue and biographical details	

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

University of Technology, Sydney

PO Box 123 Broadway
NSW 2007

III. DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY INFORMATION (FROM NON-ERIC SOURCE):

If permission to reproduce is not granted to ERIC, *or*, if you wish ERIC to cite the availability of the document from another source, please provide the following information regarding the availability of the document. (ERIC will not announce a document unless it is publicly available, and a dependable source can be specified. Contributors should also be aware that ERIC selection criteria are significantly more stringent for documents that cannot be made available through EDRS.)

Publisher/Distributor:
Address:
Price:

IV. REFERRAL OF ERIC TO COPYRIGHT/REPRODUCTION RIGHTS HOLDER:

If the right to grant this reproduction release is held by someone other than the addressee, please provide the appropriate name and address:

Name:
Address:

V. WHERE TO SEND THIS FORM:

Send this form to the following ERIC Clearinghouse:

Acquisitions Coordinator
ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education
Center on Education and Training for Employment
1900 Kenny Road
Columbus, OH 43210-1090

However, if solicited by the ERIC Facility, or if making an unsolicited contribution to ERIC, return this form (and the document being contributed) to: